policy REVIEW

Summer 1983 Number 25 $3.50

JUL 14 1983
DS 11

Madness and Guilt
Kenneth Minogue

Banking on Crisis
Brian Griffiths

Andropov & His Soviet Union
Robert Conquest and Alain Bésançon

The Fiction of Intelligence
Walter Laqueur

Bilingual Education: The Monolingual Ghetto
Robert E. Rossier

Is God a Conservative?
Antony Flew

Strategic Innovations
A Symposium

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

policy REVIEW

Edwin J. Feulner, Jr.
Publisher

John O'Sullivan
Editor

Sylvia Danovitch
Managing Editor

Sally Atwater
Robert Blake
Associate Editors

Stephanie L. Smith
Administrative Assistant

Nancy Long
Editorial Assistant

David I. Meiselman
Chairman, Editorial Board

Editorial Board

Kingsley Amis
George F. Gilder
Stephen Haseler
Harold M. Hochman
Herman Kahn
Ernest W. Lefever
Shirley Robin Letwin
Henry G. Manne
Antonio Martino
Allan H. Meltzer
Robert Moss
William Schneider, Jr.*
Gordon Tullock
Ernest van den Haag
*On leave for government service.

The authors published in *Policy Review* have complete editorial freedom and so the views expressed are those of the authors themselves and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editorial board or of The Heritage Foundation, or of any institutions with which they may be associated.

Policy Review is published quarterly by The Heritage Foundation, 214 Massachusetts Avenue, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002 (202) 546-4400. Send address change to *Policy Review*, Circulation. Subscription rates are $15 for one year, $28 for two years. Add $5 a year for foreign air-speeded delivery. Back issues are available for $2.

Policy Review is copyrighted 1983 by The Heritage Foundation. Requests for permission to reprint more than short quotations from articles should be addressed to the Managing Editor.

Policy Review is available on microfilm from University Microfilms International, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106. The International Standard Serial Number for *Policy Review* is ISSN: 0146-5945. National distributor for newsstands and bookstores: B. DeBoer, 113 E. Centre Street—Rear, Nutley, New Jersey 07110 (201) 667-9300.

Policy Review is distributed in Europe by Periodicals in Particular, One Prince of Wales Passage, 117 Hampstead Road, London NW1 3EE.

The Heritage Foundation

The Heritage Foundation is a Washington-based, nonpartisan public policy research institution which publishes a wide variety of research in various formats for the benefit of policymakers and the interested public, including *Policy Review*. The Chairman of the Board of Trustees is the Hon. Frank Shakespeare and the President is Edwin J. Feulner, Jr.

The Foundation is classified as a Section 501(c)(3) organization under the Internal Revenue Code of 1954. It is further classified as a "non-private" (i.e., "public") Foundation under Section 170(b)(1)(A)(vi) and under Section 509(A)(2) of the Code. Individuals, corporations, companies, associations, and foundations are eligible to support the work of the Foundation through tax-deductible gifts. Background material will be provided to substantiate tax-deductibility.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Summer 1983

policy REVIEW

Number 25

Contributors		3
From the Publisher, From the Editor		5
Controversy		6
Madness and Guilt: Reflections on the Hinckley Case	*Kenneth Minogue*	12
Over There	*Robert Conquest, Alain Bésançon, Dinesh D'Souza, Sergio Romano*	21
Banking on Crisis	*Brian Griffiths*	28
Bilingual Education: Training for the Ghetto	*Robert E. Rossier*	36
Invisible Taxation: The Growth of Italy's Leviathan	*Antonio Martino*	46
The Cost of Living: Life, Liberty, and Cost-Benefit Analysis	*Thomas G. Marx*	53
Storytelling and Virtue	*William Kirk Kilpatrick*	60
A Symposium on Defense	*Robert Foelber, Angelo Codevilla, Jeffrey Record, Peter T. Tarpgaard, Tidal W. McCoy*	66
*Post*script: Misreporting the Pulitzer Prize	*Joshua Muravchik*	78
Against the Grain	*Antony Flew*	81
Tales from the Public Sector	*John Blundell*	86
Reviews	*Walter Laqueur, William McGurn, Russell Kirk, Brigitte Berger, William Letwin*	90
Short Shrift	*S. Fred Singer, Thomas Humbert, Eileen M. Gardner, William H. Hutt, Robert Valero*	108
Soothsaying	*David Ranson*	111

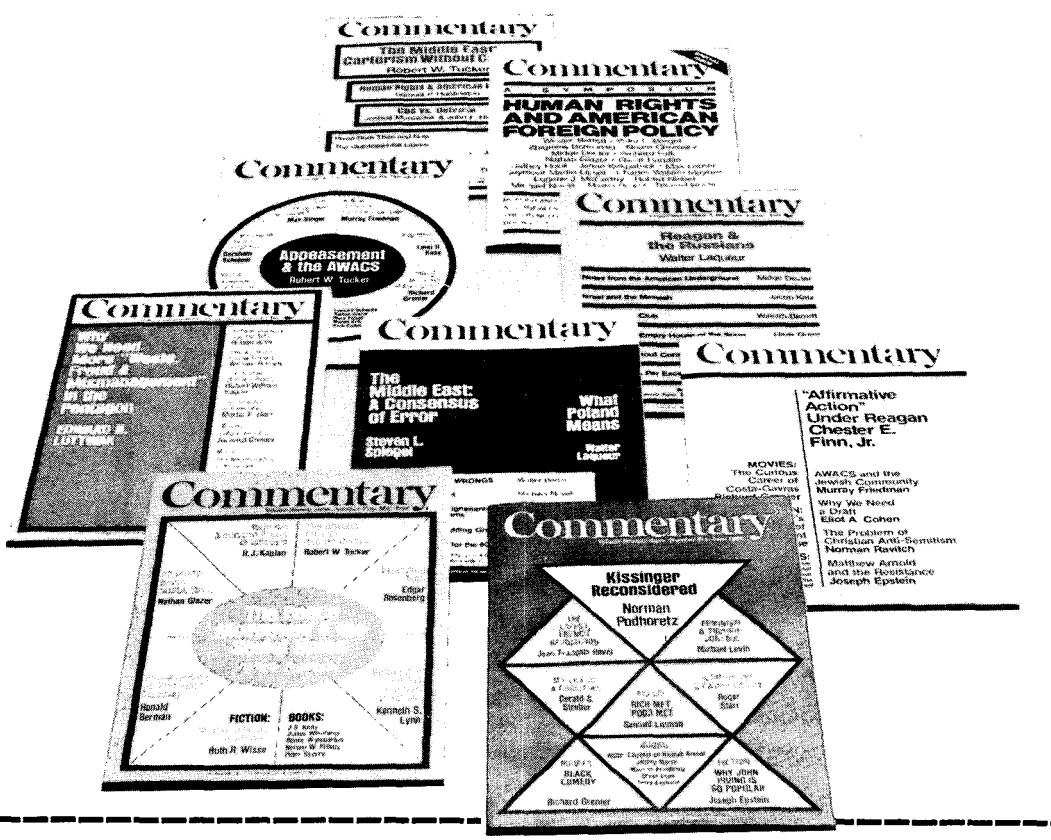
Policy Review articles are regularly abstracted or indexed in the leading social science indexing services, including *ABC-Pol Sci, Cumulative Index to Periodicals, Current Contents/Social & Behavioral Sciences, Human Resources Abstracts, International Political Science Abstracts, The Journal of Economic Literature, Monthly Periodical Index, Public Affairs Information Service, Public Policy Studies Documents, Sage Public Administration Abstracts, Sage Urban Studies Abstracts, Social Sciences Citation Index, United Nations Current Bibliographic Information, United States Political Science Documents,* and *Urban Affairs Abstracts.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IN THE WORLD OF IDEAS, NO OTHER MAGAZINE COMES CLOSE.

Clarity. Insight. Perspective. Focus. The profound excitement of issues succinctly defined, brilliantly analyzed, and placed firmly in a framework of ideas that *make sense* of the world we live in. All this —and much more of an intellectually stimulating and culturally enriching nature—is what awaits you every month in **Commentary**, *the magazine that has earned the reputation of being first in its class and way ahead of its time.*

Commentary: the journal of opinion that the opinion-makers quote. "America's most consequential journal of ideas," says the *Washington Post.* "The best monthly review in the world," observes the *London Spectator.* "The best of American intellectual monthlies," states the *London Times.*



SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY OFFER.

Use the coupon to start your subscription to one of the most influential and widely quoted magazines in the world. Your introductory six-month subscription will bring you two additional issues FREE.

COMMENTARY 165 East 56 Street, New York, N.Y. 10022

I want to discover Commentary's world of ideas. Please enter a six-month subscription for the regular price of $15 and send me two additional issues FREE.

☐ My check for $16.50 is enclosed. ☐ Bill me

Name_____

Address _____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Contributors

Brigitte Berger teaches sociology at Wellesley College; her most recent book is *The War over the Family: Capturing the Middle Ground* (Doubleday).

Alain Bésançon, a professor of Russian history at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes, is currently a visiting scholar at the Hoover Institution.

John Blundell is the director of public affairs at the Institute for Humane Studies, Menlo Park, California.

Angelo Codevilla is a staff member of the Senate Intelligence Committee. He has written widely on European politics and strategic affairs.

Robert Conquest, author of a number of books on the Soviet Union and on foreign policy, is currently a senior research fellow of the Hoover Institution.

Dinesh D'Souza, the editor of *The Dartmouth Review,* is also a New England correspondent for the *National Catholic Register* and a contributor to *National Review.*

Antony Flew is professor of philosophy at Reading University and author of *The Politics of Procrustes: Contradictions of Enforced Equality.*

Robert Foelber is an analyst of foreign policy for The Heritage Foundation.

Eileen M. Gardner is an analyst of domestic policy for The Heritage Foundation.

Brian Griffiths is dean of the business school at the City University in London and an Anglican lay preacher.

Thomas Humbert is an analyst of domestic policy for The Heritage Foundation.

William H. Hutt is a professor of economics at the University of Dallas.

William Kirk Kilpatrick teaches education psychology at Boston College. His book, *Psychological Seduction,* will be published by Thomas Nelson in the fall.

Russell Kirk is the author of many books, including the *Portable Conservative Reader* (Viking) and *Reclaiming a Patrimony* (Heritage Foundation).

Walter Laqueur is chairman of the International Research Council at Georgetown's Center for Strategic and International Studies.

William Letwin is a professor of political science at the London School of Economics and editor of *Against Equality.*

Antonio Martino is a professor of monetary history and policy at the University of Rome.

Thomas G. Marx is the director of economic policy studies for the General Motors Corporation.

Tidal W. McCoy is Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower, Reserve Affairs and Installations.

William McGurn is the assistant managing editor of *The American Spectator.*

Kenneth Minogue is reader in politics at the London School of Economics and the author of several books, including *The Liberal Mind* and *Nationalism.*

Joshua Muravchik, who is research associate of Georgetown University's Center for Strategic and International Studies, is completing a doctorate in government at Georgetown University.

David Ranson is a partner of the Boston-based H. C. Wainwright & Company Economics.

Jeffrey Record is a senior fellow at the Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis and author of *The Rapid Deployment Force and U.S. Military Intervention in the Persian Gulf,* published by the Institute in 1981.

Ambassador Sergio Romano is Italy's permanent representative to NATO and is a professor of history at the University of Florence.

Robert E. Rossier, head of an English-Spanish bilingual family, is a former teacher with twenty-five years' experience in working with immigrant students.

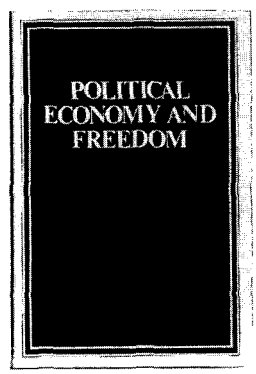
S. Fred Singer, on leave from the University of Virginia, is senior fellow for natural resources policy at The Heritage Foundation.

Peter T. Tarpgaard is a principal analyst in the National Security and International Affairs Division of the Congressional Budget Office.

Robert Valero is an analyst of domestic policy for The Heritage Foundation.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LibertyPress
LibertyClassics



Political Economy
and Freedom:
A Collection of Essays

By G. Warren Nutter
Edited by Jane Couch Nutter
Foreword by Paul Craig Roberts

G. Warren Nutter (1923-1979) was a fine economist who was also a keen student of political institutions. He was a political economist in the classical sense.

The thirty-three essays in this collection illustrate the broad range of Nutter's thought. There are essays on the Soviet economy and international relations as well as essays exploring the economic institutions which support a free society.

One finds in these essays a man of intellect and judgment ever ready to look at the evidence. He defends capitalism, not because it is perfect, but because for this imperfect world it is superior to the attainable alternatives.

Hardcover $10.00; Paperback $5.50

Prepayment is required on all orders not for resale. We pay book rate postage on prepaid orders. Please allow 4 to 6 weeks for delivery. *All* orders from outside the United States *must* be prepaid *in U.S. dollars*. To order, or for a copy of our catalogue, write:
Liberty*Press*/Liberty*Classics*
7440 North Shadeland, Dept. F112
Indianapolis, IN 46250

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

From the Publisher

Number 25 of *Policy Review* is a special issue for The Heritage Foundation. *Policy Review* begins its seventh year of publication, and it loses its editor—John O'Sullivan. John has succumbed to the blandishments of his former colleagues at the *Daily Telegraph* in London, and he will soon be returning to London to assume a senior position with that venerable print institution. John's tenure as editor of *Policy Review* has encompassed seventeen issues. His contributions to the magazine have been many: He instituted the "Against the Grain" series, introduced the "Over There" column of foreign reporting and the hilarious "Tales from the Public Sector," and, most recently, began the regular reports from David Ranson, who comments on the economy from a supply-side viewpoint. In my judgment, this issue represents John's most significant and lasting contribution to *Policy Review*. That is, he has brought to fruition the new format for *Policy Review*.

I must admit this was accomplished by John with some resistance from members of the Editorial Advisory Board and, indeed, from me, the publisher. It was not only my innate conservatism that made such a change undergo a detailed internal review process, but also the frequent praise from our primary readership—the Washington policy-making community—that led me to press certain reservations about such a change. As a conservative, I don't believe in change for change's sake. As a think tank president, I am concerned with influencing the policy makers, and most of them have assured me that *Policy Review* is effective in this regard.

When these arguments were successfully countered by John and his colleagues, I fell back on Lance's Law: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it!" But that argument was unpersuasive. Finally, I tried the first law of all publishers, "Cut the editor's budget," but even that was unsuccessful as John and his colleagues convinced me that the new format could be adopted with minimal additional expense.

Having surmounted these parochial arguments from the "practical" side, John has launched our new *Policy Review* with a new format and a new medium for expression—graphics.

I commend him, Sylvia Danovitch, and the *Policy Review* staff for having the vision and the persistence to convince me that the change was worth making. Our best wishes go with John as he returns to the *Daily Telegraph*. He has truly left his mark on *Policy Review,* and we are pleased that he will continue to provide us with his counsel as a member of our Editorial Advisory Board.

As for you, faithful reader, I hope you will share my enthusiasm for the new *Policy Review*. As a friend—more conservative than I—commented, "After all, not all change is necessarily bad."

Policy Review has been accepted by the policy makers not because it is conservative, but because it addresses real policy issues in a realistic (and not necessarily predictable) way. I hope that you, the readers of this, the flagship publication of The Heritage Foundation, will share your thoughts with us.

Edwin J. Feulner, Jr.

From the Editor

When Robert Schuettinger launched *Policy Review* in 1977, the *Library Journal* commented that the editor hoped to produce a journal written with verve and wit. That was a laudable, even ambitious aim. Readers of most journals devoted to public policy would have been content if an article therein had been written in plain English, since some had apparently been roughly translated from the original Albanian, and others had not. But as the *Library Journal* went on to report, Mr. Schuettinger achieved his ambition. When I succeeded him as editor four years ago, *Policy Review* was already remarkable as a journal that was lively as well as authoritative. I have tried to build upon its tradition so that *Policy Review,* we hope, combines the solid research of a journal with the crisp writing of a magazine.

But we have had to face the fact that this liveliness has been interred in the classic journal format. Our Puritan appearance offered no hint that a reader might be diverted by wit, excellent reporting, clear logical analysis, provocative argument, or simply good writing. And there were other considerations. By denying ourselves the use of graphics, we were denying the reader that extra illumination to be gained from a cartoon or photograph that adds historical depth to contemporary argument. Every illustration in *Policy Review,* even those that are apparently lighthearted, will serve a serious purpose. Nothing will be included simply to break up print. And, finally, we had to solve the problem that in a bookstore, *Policy Review* literally disappeared. In a world of 8½- by 11-inch magazines, a 6- by 9-inch journal is born to blush unseen.

We therefore decided to put on these smart new clothes. This has been a major enterprise for a small journal, and I would like to aim expressions of gratitude in various directions. My thanks go first to Ed Feulner, who, as he lightly points out above, performed a publisher's most necessary duties. He asked tough questions, checked and rechecked our arithmetic, and pretended to be curmudgeon. Secondly, I owe a special debt to Sylvia Danovitch, who has been tireless and imaginative in superintending the magazine's rebirth, and to my other colleagues at *Policy Review,* Sally Atwater, Nancy Long, and Stephanie L. Smith, who have worked with enthusiasm above and beyond the call of salary. Thirdly, I am still slightly dazed by my good luck in asking Jane D'Alelio and Jane Tully of Ice House Graphics to redesign the magazine and Shirley Green to research the graphics. Now we look as good as we read. Finally, I wish to thank all my Heritage colleagues whose advice and encouragement have been invaluable to me, in particular Robert Blake, formerly associate editor of *Policy Review,* who periodically prodded me into considering this change.

I am naturally sorry to be leaving *Policy Review,* where I have enjoyed the last four years, even for the green pasture of Fleet Street. But at least I am going with a vast blaze of fireworks and illumination.

John O'Sullivan

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Controversy

Is Racial Discrimination Special?

Dear Sir:

Michael Levin states what I believe is *the* valid objection to affirmative action programs as they have been implemented on the first page of his essay in the Fall 1982 issue of *Policy Review*. "Reverse discrimination," he says, "is the policy of favoring members of certain groups (usually racial), in situations in which merit has been at least ideally the criterion, on the grounds that *past* members of these groups have suffered discrimination. Giving someone a job because *he* was discriminated against does not come under this heading, since such redress is justified by ordinary canons of justice, in particular that of giving someone what he is owed."

But Professor Levin too easily assumes away the question of whether racial discrimination in employment persists in the *present*. Proof of a statement in the negative is always difficult, but in this case it is made even harder by a lack of reliable empirical evidence. No employer is going to admit that his hiring practices violate federal law on a questionnaire! Professor Levin justifies his unusual approach to the affirmative action debate on the grounds that "frontal assaults on reverse discrimination usually accomplish nothing." I believe that a case should be argued logically, according to its merit, irrespective of the consequences.

Nonetheless, his question is valid: "is *racial* discrimination special?" And in his discussion of "patterned wrongs," he comes close to suggesting why racial discrimination may indeed be special. "The second reason patterned wrongs seem especially malign," he says, "is that they create anxiety through their promise of repetition." Exactly so. It is the *psychological* impact of patterned wrongs on their victims which separates them from isolated incidents of injustice.

What separates racial discrimination from other patterned wrongs is the criterion—race. Since race is, especially for racial minorities, a central and inescapable facet of individual identity, racial discrimination affects its victims' self-image from birth to death. And "anxiety" is too mild a word to describe its effect.

To the extent that those who practice racial discrimination ultimately make its victims cooperate in their own victimization, they succeed where other criminals fail. That's what makes racial discrimination, and affirmative action, special.

Colin Gibson
Enterprise America
Los Angeles, California

Michael Levin replies:

The harm done by discrimination to black pride does not make discrimination special or warrant special treatment for blacks today. There are worse forms of injury that demand recompense more urgently—I would rather have a poor self-image than be hit by a car—and citing psychic wounds as an excuse for special treatment still ignores the innocent white. It is wrong to boost the morale of a present-day black at the expense of a white who did nothing to damage it. Anyway, a black can hardly take pride in being given a job that he and everyone else suspect he cannot do. Perhaps Mr. Gibson would have affirmative action kept secret.

Forbidding discrimination by law is the most a society can do to prevent its evils, psychic or otherwise. That violations may be tricky to detect is no excuse for penalizing the innocent. (We do not jail the usual suspects when ignorant of who committed a crime.) If the enforcement of civil rights laws is all that problematic, perhaps they should be repealed. They certainly sin against enough individual liberties.

Mr. Gibson's implicit endorsement of other forms of "affirmative action" is made more depressing by the presence of Ronald Reagan, William Simon, and Simon Ramo on *Enterprise America* letterhead. The other compensatory schemes favored by bleeding-heart conservatives also discriminate against whites. "Underutilization studies" and "outreach programs" which force employers to look extra hard for blacks are just devious forms of favoritism.

I for one would like some solid evidence, apart from the oral tradition of sociology, that discrimination has affected anybody's self-image. What of other mistreated groups whose contemporary members are not crippled "from birth to death"? Jews do not seem afflicted with weak egos even though they have been persecuted longer and more harshly than any other group.

What a Riot!

Dear Sir:

One more time. *The* final chapter.

Some of our best friends are political scientists, but in the case of Dr. Louis Bolce, he fails the "requirements" because of his robotlike excuses offered for our rebuttal to his article, "Why People Riot," which appeared in the Fall 1982 issue of *Policy Review*.

If our rebuttal (Spring 1983 *Policy Review*) and thesis "speaks for itself," why is this political scientist, who surely must believe that political science is a "science," so galled that he almost foams at the mouth rather than

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

consider our argument? If anyone shows "total contempt for the canons of scientific inquiry," it is a professor who would continually take one riot (Watts), base his entire thesis upon that particular incident, and conclude (to this very day!) that *Homo sapiens,* in general, only riots because in his own words "social forces . . . converged."

Such humbuggery would be laughable except for the fact that too many political scientists think that one quantifiable event means that *Homo sapiens* always reacts the same way. Behaviorism and Skinnerism have no place in *Policy Review.*

If the "scientific" inquiry of this professor had any validity, why didn't people riot the past two summers, or any other season, when economic and social conditions were quantifiably worse than in the summer of the Watts incident? This is not a rhetorical question. Perhaps the species' "social forces" did not, for some Neo-Darwinian theory, "converge."

We believe the people *generalis* may riot for many reasons, but if we only relied on Dr. Bolce's "scientific" data, we should have been up to our earlobes in rioting these past few years. They *(generalis)* did not riot, with the exception of Miami, and we could, if space permitted, give some causal factors far more concrete than metaphysical "social forces."

It is often impudence inherent in the newer strain of some political scientists that we abhor as much as the apparent inability of some people to understand that history is often determined, not neutrally, but by the planned actions of some of the species, *Homo sapiens.*

Where did we ever write about a "conspiracy theory"? The only one to mention that term is Dr. Bolce. Such reverse "red-baiting" is as bad as if not worse than McCarthyism. Certainly, Dr. Bolce can tell us that we red-bait if he is convinced and insists that Marxist-Leninists did *not* lead and spur on the Harlem, Newark, Philadelphia, Cleveland, and Detroit riots.

The only "mockery of common sense" comes from the purported social scientists who believe that the quantifiable number of "30,000 persons participated in the Watts riot alone" can somehow prove that Gregory Mendel's principle of independent assortment *always* applies to *Homo sapiens.* It certainly did not apply to *Cepaea nemoralis* (snails).

Dr. Bolce, allow us to suggest another field of research for your talents. We want you to "broaden your horizon." For example: Using your moldy theories, can you, do you want to explain the Soviet Marxist-Leninist role in political terrorism? Now, those are riots!

J. A. Parker, Editor, *The Lincoln Review*
Phillip Abbott Luce, Keen, Monk & Associates
Washington, D.C.

Louis Bolce replies:

The source of the data I used in my analysis of the Black Urban Riots was reported on pages 136–137 in the Fall 1982 issue of *Policy Review.* On page 136, for example, I stated that the data came from Angus Campbell and Howard Schuman's survey of "Racial Attitudes in *15* Riot Cities" (author's itals). The Campbell and Schuman study was conducted by the respected Institute for Social Research and was initiated by the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorder. The survey contained 2,809 black respondents who were interviewed during the first 3 months of 1968. The data can be obtained through the Inter-University Consortium for Political Research from the University of Michigan.

Since (1) I stated clearly that the data were drawn from interviews carried out in fifteen riot cities and therefore did not base my study on the analysis of one city; and (2) did not mention the word "Watts" in my discussion of the data, I can only conclude that Messrs. Luce and Parker either have not read my article or were hallucinating when they were reading it.

As for their assertion that the riots were caused by Marxists-Leninists, I'd like to see them publish an article with data that proves it.

Government Job Creation

Dear Sir:

Mr. Bovard's fears concerning the Job Training Partnership Act of 1982 (JTPA) are understandable given the dismal track record of previous federal attempts in employment and training. But he makes several judgments against the new program based primarily on assumptions which are no longer true.

First, he gives no credit to the Reagan administration for its resolve to fairly and effectively administer progams like the Job Corps and the summer youth employment program. Extensive administrative checks against waste and abuse have already been initiated. If Mr. Bovard were to read a yet unwritten audit by the GAO, his verdict may be different. His criticisms of these programs are based on poor past management, not on a poor concept, or lack of need. I do not disagree that there is room for improvement in these programs, and, in fact, I am pursuing the development of legislation to reform the Job Corps. The fact that the Job Corps can be a useful tool for rehabilitating hard-core disadvantaged youth who would otherwise draw a lifetime of welfare benefits should not be discounted.

Second, the provision regarding affirmative action must have been misinterpreted. Mr. Bovard, I should think, would support the idea that if business puts up its own funds to train women and minorities who are economically disadvantaged and successfully places them in unsubsidized jobs, certainly business should be relieved of some of the onerous federal requirements of Executive Order 11246. This is strictly a voluntary provision, but one which has the potential of drawing private funds into training, of placing women and minorities in jobs, and of reducing federal paperwork. If there is a choice between business spending their resources on complex affirmative action plans and compliance costs, or on training, does it not make more sense to encourage them to spend it on training?

Third, the 40% youth service requirement exists for the same reason that the Job Corps exists—that it may be possible to prevent disillusioned youth, for whom the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

school systems, families, or churches have failed, from becoming wards of society for their lifetimes. I believe Mr. Bovard would agree that youth is the hope of our free enterprise system—and if it fails, we all fail.

This is why I hold that as the butterfly replaced the caterpillar, the CETA program evolved into the Job Training Partnership Act. This programmatic transformation included five rather fundamental changes:

First of all, the JTPA is a training program. It is not an anti-poverty program, a civil rights program, a government procurement program, a counter-cyclical economic stimulus program, or a public service jobs program. The JTPA has been blessed by its Congressional sponsors with a singular purpose, that of training people for jobs. Even Senator Edward Kennedy, during debate on the measure in the Senate, conceded that "this legislation is not a jobs program . . . I think that we also need a jobs program . . . But that is not what we are considering today. We are considering a training program." Unencumbered with all of CETA's conflicting goals and purposes, JTPA is already in a better position to succeed.

Adherence to this policy is mandated by a strict prohibition on funds which can be spent for non-training purposes, i.e., income support and administration. Mr. Bovard accurately points out that CETA funds were being spent on wages, stipend, or allowances; 80 percent, in fact, of the CETA dollar was spent for purposes other than direct training. The JTPA limits funds for non-training expenses to 30 percent of the service delivery area's allocation and a full 70 percent must be spent on training. This provision will prevent the payment of income support in all but the most necessary instances and, even then, such support cannot be of such an amount that it would make the JTPA program an attractive alternative to a job.

Irrespective of the view taken by Mr. Bovard that business supported this legislation because it meant subsidies to them, business must be involved in the training program. Business has the best concept of what occupations are in demand in the labor market area and what industries are growing or declining. The private sector has the best vantage point from which to judge the quality of training curricula, therefore, helping to dissolve the possibility that individuals might be trained below the levels required by employers. If we discount business from this role because they may reap some benefit, what other institution is there in each labor market around the nation that is as responsive to market conditions and that will voluntarily devote its time and expertise to planning a local training program?

Third, to further enforce the training initiative's new market-oriented approach, performance standards, not process, will prove the program's success or failure. For the first time, adequate statistics on placement in unsubsidized jobs, other positive placements (such as enlistment in the military and enrollment in an advanced trade school) earnings gains, and welfare reductions must be accumulated. The JTPA contains both incentives to exceed performance standards and sanctions for falling short. If such standards are to be met, training must serve a real, not an imaginary, labor market.

Fourth, substantial program authority was given to substate "service delivery areas" which have been designated by governors taking into account the state's labor markets, economic activity, and boundaries for other federal programs. While CETA was administered on the basis of geography exclusively, JTPA's service units will not be as arbitrary. Governors will assume the role of chief monitor and auditor. One major failing of CETA, indicated by Mr. Bovard, was inadequate oversight. It will be far more efficient for governors to track the expenditures for the service areas in their states than for the federal Department of Labor to do so for more than 450 prime sponsors under CETA. States will be accountable to the federal government. This federalism approach will assure a better system of checks and balances on the expenditure of taxpayer-contributed training dollars.

Finally, the important relationship between the training system and the referral and placement system has been solidified by means of the incorporation of amendments to the Wagner-Peyser Act in JTPA. These amendments will tie the purposes of the United States Employment Service together with the new training system so that planning for each function can be both concurrent and complementary. Perhaps, because of these amendments, we will be able to refrain from reinventing the wheel.

Mr. Bovard does a great service in providing this history of federal employment and training efforts. His analysis is largely correct. I only take issue with what I read to be his cynicism about the future. While the new Job Training Partnership Act is not perfect, from anyone's point of view, it is the least imperfect compromise Congress is ever likely to enact. Given the citizens and organizations that have developed a stake in such programs and are not likely to let them expire, we had all better be positive that the private-public partnership guiding the Job Training Partnership Act is successful.

Senator Orrin G. Hatch
United States Senate
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir:

As Mr. Bovard points out, the reason why government jobs programs have *never* been able to significantly alter the level of unemployment is because the taxes, debt, or money creation used to finance such programs divert resources from the more productive private sector of the economy. There is less private production and employment, in favor of more public sector employment. Government jobs programs have never significantly altered the *level* of unemployment; they merely altered its *composition*. In fact, because only a small portion of the money spent on jobs programs goes to wages (the rest going for administrative expenses and materials), they often result in a *reduction* in total employment. This, of course, is no mystery. The notion of "opportunity cost" is at least as old as Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, which was published over 200 years ago and is described in chapter one of every economics textbook in the world.

Why then do such programs persist in a democratic

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

society? The answer lies in the essential nature of all such special interest legislation. The major beneficiaries of such programs—politicians, the social work bureaucracy, unionized labor, and big businesses who can train their workers at taxpayers' expense—are very well organized politically, whereas the major losers—those who become unemployed because of the crowding out effect and the general taxpaying public—are not. Furthermore, those who become unemployed have no direct way of knowing that increased government spending and taxing was the cause of their misfortune. Finally, government jobs programs provide politicians with patronage opportunities and other forms of campaign support.

Even though jobs programs are often legislatively enacted in times of relatively high unemployment, it usually takes years to implement them. Consequently, they are frequently put in place *after* the economy has already recovered and therefore serve only to destabilize it. If they are financed by taxes, the recovery is less robust than otherwise; if money creation is the financing vehicle, high inflation is the result. Odd though it sounds, this is the consequence of rational *political* behavior. The recent rush for "jobs legislation," in the shadow of a strong recovery, is clearly aimed at putting into place a backlog of patronage handouts to be distributed by the incumbents in Congress during the 1984 election campaigns.

But the general theme of Mr. Bovard's article is what one might call government failure. One important aspect of this is the fact that he found "ease of administration" to be a major criteria used to determine the type of training provided by government job training programs. The question this provokes is, Do government bureaucrats have strong incentives to spend all the time and effort it takes to match an individual's aptitude and preferences to the demands of the market? The answer is an unqualified "no." There are no rewards in either salary increases or budget increments to those who would do so. Besides, it is impossible for an "outside observer" to make such decisions efficiently. Only individuals themselves are able to make the necessary tradeoffs regarding shifting employment and career opportunities. This is illustrated by Mr. Bovard who reports the very low rate at which government trainees retain employment after the program has ended. The problem is that such trainees become skilled at doing whatever government bureaucrats seem to favor at the moment, not what the market reveals as the most valuable areas of training and employment. To the extent that jobs programs provide such "false training" they will lead to *higher* long-run unemployment than would otherwise occur.

Thomas J. DiLorenzo
George Mason University
Fairfax, Virginia

Dear Sir:

I am concerned by the presentation of only the faults and deficiencies of government job creation programs in James Bovard's piece, "Busy Doing Nothing." Because our society has already made the decision not to let people starve, the next decision we make is whether we want to pay people for doing nothing, or pay them for doing something. His answer, by implication, is to pay them for doing nothing. It is the answer our society has backed into.

The WPA-type programs which Bovard criticizes make a great deal more sense. I have received letters from people involved with the WPA, and I would like to share a sample of their comments.

From Santa Clara, California, an area with an unemployment rate of 9.8 percent in January of this year: "During the Great Depression, my parents lost their small town newspaper and went bankrupt. On WPA, my mother learned to operate a power sewing machine and made clothing to be distributed at local outlets where surplus food was also given out. The practice with a power machine became a blessing, a work experience which enabled her to operate machines when WWII began."

Also from Santa Clara: "I worked for the park department during the WPA days, watching children while their mothers worked. I found teaching boys to build model airplanes so fascinating, I took some evening school classes in aircraft mechanics and got a full-time job at Lockheed, even before the war."

From Williamson County, Illinois, an area with a 22.8 percent jobless rate in January: "I remember the WPA days. I witnessed the building of Lake Crab Orchard which repaid its builders many times over when the nation needed a site to manufacture ammunitions. I saw unemployed miners taking the subsistence WPA wages in a battle to feed their families."

From Hancock County, Illinois, an area with 14.3 percent unemployment in January: "We built the Carthage Post Office and a ball field in Dallas. The WPA turned things around."

From Fayette County, Illinois, an area with 18.1 percent unemployment at the start of this year: "The WPA brought 418 miles of graveled roads to Fayette County; six new bridges; 362 new culverts; 3,325 linear feet of curbing; 1,725 feet of drain tile; clearing and building of four and one-half miles of levees; 367 sanitary privies; 9.59 miles of new sidewalk; one-half mile of new sewer; 598.5 acres cleared and landscaped; 4.228 cu. yd. terracing in Vandalia Cemetery, etc."

From Grand Haven, Michigan, an area with 12.6 percent unemployment at the end of 1982: "The WPA provided a concept of personal discipline and responsibility and an opportunity for many young men."

I received these comments in response to legislation I've introduced which is modeled after the WPA. H.R. 777, the Full Employment Work Opportunity Act, is a project-oriented jobs initiative in which locally designated work projects, with clear objectives and definite work schedules, create useful jobs mostly involving low-skilled work on projects of local importance. It is a long-term answer to the nation's unemployment problem and would implement a policy of full employment in which those out of work thirty days or longer and unable to find work in the private sector are offered project-oriented public works jobs in thirty-two-hour work weeks at the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

minimum wage, administered locally.

Even after the strongest of possible recoveries from the 1981–83 recession, unemployment will linger. Forecasts project a growing pool of unskilled workers suited for a declining reservoir of such jobs. The Full Employment Work Opportunity Act takes the next step by shifting policy sharply away from welfare support and unemployment compensation for the unemployed and toward a policy of constructive full employment, turning the liability of chronic unemployment into a national asset.

Paul Simon
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

James Bovard replies:

The JTPA is far better designed than the public service employment CETA [Comprehensive Employment and Training Act] program, and for that achievement Senator Hatch should be congratulated. No one will accuse the JTPA of being, like CETA, a Full Employment for Investigative Journalists Act. The Reagan administration wisely changed the emphasis from make-work to job training. But the question remains whether government is competent to oversee and direct job training. JTPA is better than CETA because it is better to waste a small amount of money than a large amount. But it would still be best not to waste any money.

The JTPA represents "pork-barrel job training," a little something for business, a little something for state and local governments, and so on down the line. If Congress really wanted to serve the unskilled, a voucher plan along the lines of GI bill veterans' benefits would probably be the most effective and least wasteful method.

The JTPA looks to have many safeguards to ensure sober operation. But, CETA had a bushel of such regulations. To no avail. The best laid plans of Capitol Hill easily sink into the labyrinth of the Labor Department.

The private sector alone, with no labor restrictions and a sane tax level, could far outperform any government effort. People—even poor people—managed to learn skills before 1961 without government intervention, and there is no reason why they cannot again do so. The goal should be to reprivatize job training. The government is as incompetent at telling people what skills they should have as it would be at telling businesses what products they should market. The worst thing about the JTPA is that it makes it look like government is in the job-training business to stay—despite a twenty-year record of fiascos.

Representative Simon says we have a choice "to pay people for doing nothing, or pay them for doing something." I agree that people who are getting government handouts should, if at all able, have to work them off. I would support requiring unemployment compensation recipients, after the first month of benefits, to work ten or twenty hours a week for a local government. I also favor putting teeth into work requirements for food stamps and Aid to Families with Dependent Children. The goal of such programs should be to make the dole less costly to taxpayers and less attractive to potential recipients.

But as for Mr. Simon's faith in public works . . . I lived in the congressman's district in southern Illinois in 1979–80 in a little city appropriately named Carbondale. Now, they had a big snowstorm, and the city required all residents and businesses to shovel the snow on their sidewalks within twenty-four or forty-eight hours. Who should get a ticket for failure to clear the sidewalk but . . . the local Public Works Agency. Need I say more?

Tax-Supported Ditties

Dear Sir:

Dinesh D'Souza's sparkling revelations of the poetry supported by taxpayers (*Policy Review,* Spring and Summer 1982) inspired my following poem:

It would be all right
if they were to write
or publish
whatever they want.
But why must I
be compelled to pay?

The poems do not, after all,
like the army
protect me or, like the Post Office,
render a service I need
or remove the garbage—
(alas, au contraire.)
Why can't I take them or leave them as
I want?
And why can't I get
a grant
for this?

Rodolfo, thou.
a grantee now.
She dead.
Mimimimimimimimimimimimimimimimi
Where is thy song?

Ernest van den Haag
New York, New York

Due to typographical error, four words were omitted from Joshua Muravchik's article, "Misreporting Lebanon," in the Winter 1983 issue of *Policy Review*. The first two sentences on page 34 should read, "But Israel didn't pulverize any quiet neighborhoods. It bombed some quiet neighborhoods that contained PLO positions, but *the vast bulk of* this occurred weeks after this story was written." The omission of the italicized words changed the meaning, and the editors regret the error.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

If you have not subscribed to

The New Criterion

edited by Hilton Kramer

you are missing out on the most important cultural review to have appeared in a generation.

Since its first monthly issue, published in September 1982, THE NEW CRITERION has been the subject of controversy. Acclaimed and denounced, it has quickly established itself as the leading critical journal of the 1980s. Here, selected from the first seven issues, are some of the reasons why:

■ *William Arrowsmith:* Eros in Terre Haute: T.S. Eliot ■ *Frederick Brown:* Sartre and de Beauvoir ■ *Hortense Calisher:* The Novels of Barbara Pym ■ *Elias Canetti:* Berlin in the 1920s ■ *Joseph Epstein:* Reviewing and Being Reviewed ■ *Joshua Gilder:* Ann Beattie's Stories ■ *Gertrude Himmelfarb:* Who Now Reads Macaulay? ■ *Ada Louise Huxtable:* Skyscraper Architecture ■ *William H. Jordy:* Frank Lloyd Wright at the Met ■ *Hilton Kramer:* Postmodern: The 1980s ■ *Brad Leithauser:* Metrical Illiteracy ■ *Samuel Lipman:* Stravinsky—Re-recording History ■ *Joseph Masheck:* Calder's No-Fault "Circus" ■ *John Bernard Myers:* Mark Rothko and the Rothko Case ■ *David Paul:* Richard Howard's Baudelaire ■ *Donald Petersen:* The Legacy of Robert Lowell ■ *Norman Podhoretz:* F.R. Leavis: A Revaluation ■ *Frederic Prokosch:* Memoirs of Artists and Writers ■ *Robert Richman:* In Search of Edward Thomas ■ *Sanford Schwartz:* The Art of Anselm Kiefer ■ *And two special features:* ■ "The Interrogation": The Fate of a Polish Film under Martial Law ■ *Hortense Calisher:* "Writers in Eastern Europe," with responses by Stanislaw Barańczak, William Barrett, Cynthia Ozick, and Richard Wilbur.

These are representative of the articles, chronicles, and reviews that appear in every issue of THE NEW CRITERION, published ten times a year, monthly from September through June. To open your subscription, starting with the June 1983 issue, use the coupon. Please note that prepaid subscriptions bring a saving of $3 (for one year) and $5 (for two years).

The New Criterion 850 Seventh Avenue New York, N.Y. 10019

Please open my subscription, starting with the June 1983 issue, on the terms I have checked below:

I choose to save by enclosing payment

☐ *One year, 10 issues (*$24 *enclosed, I save* $3*)*

☐ *Two years, 20 issues (*$45 *enclosed, I save* $5*)*

Please bill me at the regular rate

☐ *One year, 10 issues (Bill me for* $27*)*

☐ *Two years, 20 issues (Bill me for* $50*)*

Charge my MasterCard No. _____
at the prepaid rate: ☐ *One year,* $24 ☐ *Two years,* $45

Name _____

Address _____ Apt. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please make check payable to The New Criterion. Foreign subscribers (including Canada and Latin America) add $4 per year, with total payable in U.S. funds. Allow 4 to 6 weeks for your June issue to arrive.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Madness and Guilt

Reflections on the Hinckley Case

Kenneth Minogue

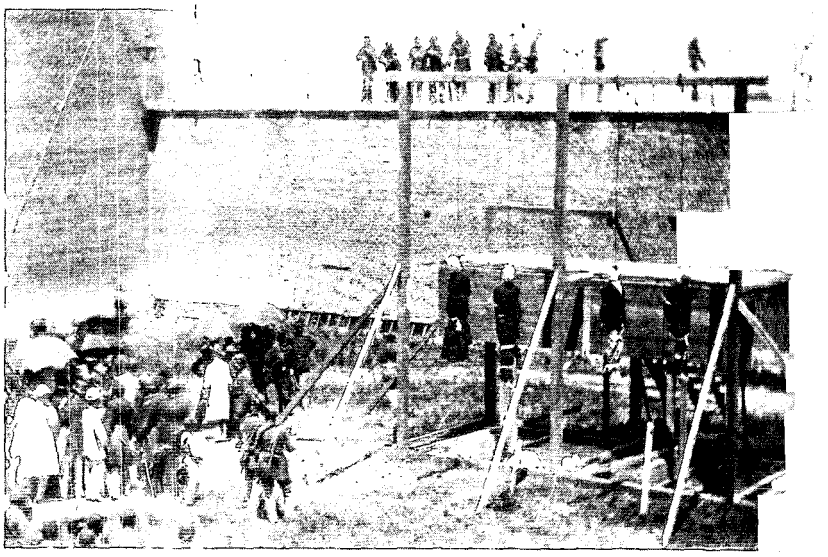
Evil used to hide in dark corners, but today its natural habitat is under arc lights. Evil deeds make good copy. Evildoers have their own story to tell. They play upon our relativistic uncertainties to become heroes—of a kind. John Hinckley took great care that his impulses should be played out on the grandest stage available. There was much talk, in the court that tried him, of fantasy, fiction, and "bizarre thoughts," but there was nothing of fantasy in his careful choice of "exploding bullets for maximum killing power." His case thus poses for the commentator a serious dilemma. It is clearly a fascinating exhibition of the kind of human passions usually kept on a leash and thus holds up a distorting mirror to the way we live and think. Yet Mr. Hinckley's attempt to assassinate President Reagan was a type of evil act whose success in attaining its object depended (like the successes of terrorist deeds) upon the attention we choose to accord it. In attending to it, we connive at the process by which the exhibitionistic atrocity becomes one of the characteristic forms of contemporary self-expression. We can only console ourselves with the thought that the problem is not new. In ancient Greece a Hinckley of his day called Herostratus burned down the Temple of Artemis for no other reason than a lust for fame. Alexander the Great in vain ordered that Herostratus's name should be struck from all records. We had better grasp the nettle.

The legal profession's misuse of psychiatric concepts in the courtroom has led the public to fault the entire science of the mind, which is popularly and incorrectly equated with the rather specific theories of Sigmund Freud.

Fame was something grand in the days of Herostratus. It is the mind-numbing triviality of Mr. Hinckley's crime that first overwhelms anyone who considers it, and the significant thing is the element of complacent cunning with which Mr. Hinckley himself recognizes that a triviality so grotesque can be, and in fact was, construed as insanity. "I was found not guilty by reason of insanity," he wrote after the verdict was in, "because I shot the president and three other people in order to impress a girl." One is reminded of the girl in Perth, Western Australia, who burned down the student hostel in which she was living because she was bored and thought that a fire would bring a sense of community to the place. On the face of it, what we confront is a case of irresponsible infantilism, but this judgment is immediately modified once we start to consider the background of Mr. Hinckley's assassinatory thoughts. Part of this background lies in the fact that Mr. Hinckley had, in the course of his life, developed a profound contempt for peaceful and sedentary occupations—especially those of accountant and insurance salesman.

The history of attitudes toward vocations, attitudes through which our contemporaries indulge their propensity to admire and despise, is one of the more fascinating chapters in the history of fashion. Such attitudes in the past were usually intertwined with social status. The aristocracy were supposed to look down on trade, while those in trade looked down on those with dirty fingernails—or, at least, the more featherheaded people in each group did. In Bohemian circles, when I was a student, the bank clerk was thought to epitomize a dull conformist life, an opinion that I greatly enjoyed holding until I discovered that T. S. Eliot, who possibly wrote better poetry than the layabouts from whom I contracted this opinion, had spent some years in that profession. In recent decades particularly, the pedagogic professions have been in the habit of trying to motivate their charges by terrifying them with the prospect of ending up in things called dead-end jobs. We live with the consequences today. On the other hand, dingy and marginal jobs, like that of the private detective or the intelligence agent, are much admired because of an element of danger and perhaps of moral ambiguity. It is all a world away from Larry, the mystical hero of Somerset Maugham's *The Razor's Edge,* who escaped these prejudices because he was concerned with the inner rather than the outer life. Correspondingly, it is precisely because Mr.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



A would-be assassin from another era—Lewis Payne, a "mad" young man who joined the conspiracy against President Lincoln and wounded Secretary Seward and three others—ended up dangling from the gallows.

Hinckley seems to have had little in the way of an inner life of his own that he was led, in the end, to create a substitute for it, in the form of pleasurably contemplating the thought that others were thinking about him.

In thus despising insurance salesmen and accountants, no doubt because they seldom pull out a gun or sock someone on the jaw, Mr. Hinckley was simply yearning to be a hero, someone who takes his destiny into his own hands. But his notion of a hero seems purely to have mirrored the outward and visible violence of popular fiction. Mr. Hinckley seems to have been entirely oblivious of the vestigial traces of virtue that writers usually incorporate in the figure of a hero as a justification of the violent proclivities of the secret agents, private eyes, and cowboys they write about. To this particular insensitivity in John Hinckley we shall return, for it is the basis of construing him as a psychopath. It is a point that turned up in the trial in a curiously slanted form. Mr. Hinckley, according to psychiatric testimony, had "a long-standing interest in becoming famous without working."[1] This comment misses the point, because heroes are never constituted by hard work. Apart from Hercules, who had his labors, whoever became famous—as against prosperous or successful—from working hard? Fame is the attribute of heroes, and although we often hear something of their apprentice labors mastering swordsmanship, six-guns, strategy, guile, or whatever else is necessary, we are usually made to understand that such heroes are naturals. Their heroism does not lie in the labor value they expend. The fame of heroes is like the reception of the prodigal son—a mysterious and uncovenanted grace. Mr. Hinckley certainly realized this. He was merely wrong in thinking that any "paunchy young drifter"[2] could just shoot his way into so exclusive a club.

Nevertheless, all of these considerations, which point to both the futility and the triviality of what Mr. Hinckley did, are likely to confuse us unless we also recognize the supreme rationality of his act. Given the severe limits of his imagination, he has thus far succeeded in doing exactly what he set to do, and it is the widespread public recognition of this fact that explains the outrage at the verdict that he was not guilty by reason of insanity. As we have seen, Mr. Hinckley himself was later to realize the convenience of this verdict and the considerations that made it plausible: namely, that trying to shoot a president as a way of impressing a girl is so remarkable an act that, in our speechlessness of response, we find ourselves drifting toward the language of madness. Mr. Hinckley's other thoughts, however, are quite different, and much more relevant. He thinks that he and Jodie Foster will be "linked forever in history" and that "she can never go anywhere in life now without thinking of him."[3] Swinging back and forth between literary and historical references, he talks of his act as a "historical deed" and compares himself and Miss Foster to Napoleon and Josephine (not altogether felicitously) and to Romeo and Juliet. Could any young man indulging in himself an overpowering wish to be linked forever in the public mind with a girl have devised a more successful strategy? It may be insensibility, or it may be heroism, but it is certainly a classically romantic act to court death or lifelong imprisonment as a tribute to a young girl, especially if she is highly unlikely to notice such a lover on any other terms. Far from being insane, such an act demonstrates that, whatever Miss Foster may think on the matter, the link is serious, indissoluble, and quite unavoidable. She is unlikely to be the object of any such

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

grand passion ever again. Compared with the luminous rationality of this unusual course of action, much of the psychiatric evidence about bizarre thoughts and narcissistic personality disorders looks like so much obfuscatory mumbo jumbo.

What is objectionable about the idea of madness is that it seems to solve all the problems that arise in confronting acts and thoughts that we find strange, objectionable, or repellent. Indeed, there is a striking current misuse of psychiatric language that leads speedily to the conclusion that we are *all* mad. Thus the central psychiatric term schizophrenia is popularly supposed to mean "split personality" and frequently applied to examples of common or garden moodiness. Paranoia is invoked when people talk about their enemies. The clinical term obsession is popularly applied to any kind of overriding preoccupation, and those who become angry will be lucky to avoid the imputation of hysteria. There is no mystery about the cause of this type of misuse: It arises when a semiskilled intelligentsia sets out to impress upon listeners that the speaker has enormous wordpower. What such misuse domesticates in our minds is the idea that everyone is mad, since everyone exhibits forms of behavior that can be misjudged in these terms. When this type of linguistic corruption is combined with the ordinary parochiality of the human mind, which typically judges remote and unusual beliefs as "mad," the outcome is virtually a clinical conception of the whole human race. Soviet psychiatry is highly latitudinarian in discovering that dissidents are psychologically disturbed, and a similar extension of psychiatric understandings disposes many people in the West to treat adherents to unusual religious or political sects as mad. For we feel more confident in invoking the therapeutic idea of madness than we do in judging that certain practices are bad or dangerous.

A Superior Form of Sanity

The idea of madness is, then, dangerously useful. Which of us has not cried "you're insane" to someone whose latest thought or proposal seems beyond the borders of what we currently choose to accept? The plausibility of such hyperbole is heightened by the fact that there is an important sense in which we *are* all mad, for the public world of human understandings in which we live has been painfully shaped out of the vast complex of wild impulses and irrational associations that we daily experience and now think of as the kingdom of dreams. As we grow up, we learn to concentrate our minds and control our actions so that by conforming to legal, moral, and linguistic rules, we are able to provoke appropriate responses from others. The insane are, in these terms, merely those who for one reason or another have been unable to learn the skill of orderly thought and action. In them, disorder is constant and crippling, whereas for the rest of us, it is merely intermittent, revealing itself in slips of the tongue, drunken incoherence, occasional acts of folly. For this reason, "madness" as an epithet is ever plausible, and the resulting temptation is to identify sanity with what we currently happen to find normal and acceptable. That way, as James Thurber once put it, "madness lies," for the reason that if sanity is merely whatever is respectable, then some bold and venturesome exponent of psychiatric trivialities is certain to come forward with the view that madness is really a superior form of sanity—and exactly this view has, of course, surfaced out of the muddle of psychiatry in the last few decades, in the thought of Ronald Laing, David Cooper, Jacques Lacan, and their like.

If we misjudge the idea of madness, then, every deviation from the rules will seem mad, and we end up with a situation not altogether different from the misuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union[4]: any rejection of the current rules is banished to an outer darkness, beyond the public world, as "madness." But since such things are not in fact mad, they begin to compose a coherent counterculture in their own right, and such a consequence is mischievous because it creates a type of destructive civil war within culture. Certain forms of the romantic move-

The central point is that responsibility begins where psychiatry ends, and psychiatry thus has no idea of how to deal with it.

ment in art, and many familiar types of political and religious occultism have, in fact, been exploiting such possibilities along the borderlines of madness for a century or more.[5] The effect they have is not merely to erode particular versions of public and intellectual order (which are, in any case, subject to the ceaseless erosion of time) but to subvert the very idea of an order altogether. Masquerading under the banner of liberation, these nihilistic spasms tend toward reducing both culture and social life to a mere sequence of impulse and posture.

But the dangers of misusing the idea of madness can be focused much more precisely in terms of the issue of moral responsibility, which the Hinckley jury had to decide. Mr. Hinckley's case falls upon a critical junction in our ideas of mind and matter, of act and consequence. Herbert Hart pinpointed this particular junction when he argued that, whereas in the early development of Anglo-Saxon law, "the doctrine of *mens rea*" (i.e. a guilty mind) was regarded as "a hall-mark of a civilized legal system," in recent times, progressive and liberal criticism of the law has moved in the direction of getting rid of *mens rea* altogether.[6] And Professor Hart goes on to point out that the view that lawyers have no business poking around inside a man's mind is not at all new, quoting a fourteenth-century British judge as remarking: "The thought of man is not triable; the devil alone knoweth the thought of man." Whatever the devil's powers in this respect, they can hardly help but exceed those of the psychiatrists who testified to such contradictory effect in the Hinckley case.

The central point is that responsibility begins where psychiatry ends, and psychiatry thus has no idea of how to deal with it. Psychiatrists were originally brought into trials in the hope that as experts in mental pathology,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

they might introduce an authoritative decision into some of the areas where judges and juries were forced to make what were inevitably rather brutally imprecise practical judgments of responsibility. But whatever the actual contributions psychiatrists might make to a forensic process, they cannot, for logical reasons, supply any illumination that would supersede the necessity for solving the practical problem of the idea of responsibility itself, by diffusing the conviction that everything we do proceeds directly from psychological determinants without any significant intervention of that moral organ, hopelessly *persona non grata* in the scientific world, called "the will." In undermining the practical currency of these ideas, psychiatrists have been doing something much more portentous than reshuffling the conceptual pack with which we attempt to understand the character of human action. They have been subverting a central prop

We have argued that the idea of madness is dangerously volatile. That of guilt is no less so. And the conceptual chaos in this area is closely linked.

in the way we live, and the Hinckley case provides an occasion for considering what, in the most general terms, is at stake.

John Hinckley's father appears to have behaved responsibly, as a father ought to have done, yet in the witness box he remarked: "I am the cause of my son's tragedy." Hinckley, junior, by contrast, wrote in the aftermath of his acquittal: "My fragile conscience is clear of useless guilt." No doubt both of these remarks should be seen in context—the father speaking in the stress of the trial itself, the son apparently pleased with, and therefore helping to justify, the jury's verdict by calling his conscience "fragile." These things considered, however, there is a remarkable contrast between an innocent man who seems to have done his best to perform his duties and yet finds himself responsible, while another who undoubtedly committed a criminal act happily washes his hands of what he calls "useless guilt." We have argued that the idea of madness is dangerously volatile. That of guilt is no less so. And the conceptual chaos in this area is closely linked.

Guilt is culpability arising from some act of omission, and it requires both some defect of the will (which may be what the law calls *mens rea,* or may, alternatively, be some form of culpable negligence) and the act itself. The act alone cannot be the basis of guilt, else we should be accountable for accidental or unforeseeable or uncontrollable consequences of what we do. Nor can the will by itself, because otherwise men's thoughts and intentions would be subject to punishment. Before the tribunal of conscience, no doubt, most of us are on the alert to an extent that depends upon our sensitivity or insensitivity to such moral considerations. We tend to find people morally admirable according to the vivacity of their conscience, and we are wary of the unscrupulous. But we may also recognize that there are forms of extreme scrupulousness—those involving a constant preoccupation with guilt—which are not altogether admirable because they waste moral energy on trivial matters. Guilt is, further, the *recognition* that we have transgressed and is thus a characteristic experience of those (like all of us in the modern world) who live within a complicated network of different systems of rules, and the value of the experience of guilt is that it is part of the process of revitalizing our sense of the importance of those rules. Remorse and repentance are thus important stations of the moral life, without which the autonomous individual self-government characteristic of our civilization would be impossible. And it should be noted that these experiences are, in the first instance, *recognitions* that a transgression has occurred, and thus separable from the feelings (which may be slight or intense) with which we respond to such recognitions.

This distinction is important in the Hinckley case because of psychiatric testimony that Mr. Hinckley's personality disorders "left him unable to feel remorse or sorrow or sympathy for the victims of the crime."[7] There does not appear to be any evidence, indeed, that he did feel any of these emotions. Whether he was *unable* to do so is a separate and more difficult question. But neither of these issues settles the question of his capacity for responsibility, which must rest primarily upon whether he could *recognize* that his actions violated laws and caused suffering. The psychiatrist who testified about Mr. Hinckley's inability to feel remorse was called Dr. Johnson, and he thus recalls for us an earlier Dr. Johnson who took a much more robust line about the romantic cult of feeling. Thus: "BOSWELL. 'I have often blamed myself, Sir, for not feeling for others as sensibly as many say they do.' JOHNSON. 'Sir, don't be duped by them any more. You will find these very feeling people are not very ready to do you good. They pay you by *feeling*.' "[8]

Rooting Out the Causes

Where, we must ask, did Mr. Hinckley pick up the idea that guilt is useless? The answer is, I think, that it has become an unavoidable part of the therapeutic atmosphere of contemporary civilization, and it derives from the positivist doctrine that to understand is better than to be censorious. In dealing with crime, delinquency, neurosis and the rest, one ought to search out the causes (sometimes, in a paroxysm of redundancy, causes become the "root-causes") rather than "express one's disapproval." This was no doubt a more appealing position in the days before the criminals, delinquents, and neurotics themselves took it up as part of their justificatory patter,[9] but it remains powerful because it is the message that every college-educated bourgeois takes from his instruction. Nor is it difficult to see the point of it. Intellectually speaking, our understanding of, say, a historical character like Nero, or the psychology of a type of behavior, such as paedophilia, will merely be impeded if we treat it censoriously; this is as a practical question. Further, the growth of psychotherapy in this century was

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

based upon the idea that patients could only be cured through self-revelation, which could hardly begin unless the listener were sympathetic even to the most alarming revelations. Here, as at all points along this front, the moral and the therapeutic positions have been entrenchedly hostile.

The triumph of the therapeutic point of view is, indeed, on no point more conclusive than in its inculcation of the view that the moral understanding is nothing more than the expression of an attitude of censure, and that guilt is merely an irrational emotion we indulge because we cannot face up to the real causes of how we have acted. This doctrine certainly makes for a more forward-looking world, a world of perpetual moratoria. The slate is wiped clean the moment a mark appears upon it. In such a world, all of those whose business it is to be custodians of the rules find themselves on the defensive. They are construed merely as authorities whose main activity is that of censoriousness: judges, policemen, priests, schoolmasters, and parents. The end of this particular road is, if I may again quote Professor Hart in the sphere of law, "a scepticism of the whole institution of criminal punishment so far as it contains elements which differentiate it from a system of purely forward looking social hygiene in which our only concern, when we have an offender to deal with, is with the future and the rational aims of the prevention of further crime, the protection of society and the care and if possible the cure of the offender."[10]

The Politics of Guilt

It is not the case, however, that the therapeutic viewpoint has succeeded entirely in banishing the concept of guilt to the ghetto of barbarous relics dating from prescientific times. Rather, it has achieved what we may call, adapting a phrase from T. S. Eliot, a dissociation of guilt. In undermining the idea that specific acts are, for any useful purpose, blameworthy, it has encouraged the view that certain *conditions* of life, inhabited by distinct categories of people, are blameworthy. The idea of useless guilt, in other words, is the first step in the postulation of a causal process by which a culpable causality is to be attributed to some grand abstract collective: It may be some system that notionally determines the main features of our civilization (such as capitalism or patriarchy) or it may be some collection of people whose enjoyment of benefits is thought to be the direct correlation of poverty, crime, and delinquency, and the guilty entities are here likely to be whites, the middle class, Americans, or (in relation, for example, to the poverty of the thing called the Third World) the inhabitants of advanced Western societies. A parallel move in the sphere of political rhetoric has led to the revival of the idea of collective guilt, such as that of the Germans for the First and Second World Wars and for the Holocaust, or the Americans for the war in Vietnam. Out of such considerations as these emerges a split between what we may call objective guilt, which may be attributed to people who have had no direct connection with the transgression, and subjective guilt, which is a feeling experienced by some members of the accused classes. It is, of course, virtually impossible to organize a modern society without punishment for actual transgressors, and this element of reality, like the lead in dolls that causes them always to return to the original position, prevents the concept of guilt from being entirely torn from its moorings, but it has unmistakably swung away from the individual toward the collectivity. Guilt has thus become a political matter, and the causal link between act and consequence has changed its character. In forensic employments of the concept, guilt is decided by a jury, or a conscience, on the basis of whether some rule has been culpably transgressed, but the issue of collective guilt or innocence depends upon such complex academic questions as whether the consumption of the rich is causally linked to poverty in other countries, or whether crime and delinquency are, in fact, determined by social factors arising directly from a form of social organization that correlatively benefits the rich.

[What is remarkable] is the revival of the very old . . . doctrine of collective responsibility under the guise of the latest thing in scientific . . . thinking.

These are questions of such a kind that only a fool would imagine he knew the answer. We can have even less certainty on these matters than anywhere else in science. But to treat this issue by invoking elementary considerations in the philosophy of science is to miss what is perhaps the most remarkable feature of this intellectual fashion: namely, that it is the revival of the very old (and in our eyes, barbaric) doctrine of collective responsibility under the guise of the latest thing in scientific and compassionate thinking. And it has been, of course, particularly these barbaric wolves in sheep's clothing that have played such a devastating part of the politics of our departing century. Doctrines of the collective guilt or the collective uselessness of whole sets of people have led other sets of people—those with guns—to do away with them. Guilt is a very practical question, and we need to be clear about it if we are to avoid some very nasty practical consequences.

That the whirlwinds of mass politics have, in this century, swept millions of people into oblivion thus makes it intensely important that we should keep the firmest possible grip upon the connection between crime and punishment, for the two ideas are so closely connected in our minds that we may easily enough fall into the trap of believing that whole classes of people whose destruction by their political enemies is described as "punishment" must have been guilty. It has not been unknown for people to think that although Hitler rather went over the top with the Jews, nonetheless they must have been pretty bad to have provoked such treatment. And in the case of the victims of the Moscow purge trials, as we know, the connection was so strong that some of the victims themselves began composing totally imagi-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nary crimes that would help explain why they were being punished. The dissociation of guilt and punishment is thus at the center of the totalitarian nightmare of our century, and the connection runs both ways.

Adrift from its moorings in responsibility, then, guilt becomes the plaything of political and moral fashions. If one condition of life can be guilty, then so too can any other, and we begin to live in a capricious and unpredictable world. Freedom disappears not merely because of this element of despotic caprice but also because the concept of guilt is integral to a community of individuals managing their own lives under rules. Without it, no state could transfer so much of the business of sustaining a social order away from custom to the individual conscience.

The Hinckley verdict outraged many Americans because it seemed to exonerate an evident evildoer. Yet so far as the practical outcome is concerned, the insanity verdict may well incarcerate Mr. Hinckley more thoroughly than a guilty verdict would have done: It will take a psychiatrist of strong nerve to chance his arm certifying that Mr. Hinckley is sane and fit to walk streets where any phantasist can buy the firearm of his choice for a few dollars—exploding bullets no doubt a few dollars more. The communal instinct that condemned the verdict seems to be based on the view that the balance between insanity and guilt was wrongly drawn. The real problem is how it is to be drawn at all. Stuart Taylor, Jr., who covered the trial and wrote an excellent account in *Harper's*,[11] described John Hinckley as "a simultaneously sick and evil young man." But if Mr. Hinckley really is sick, i.e., crazy, then it makes little sense to talk of him as evil, for there isn't really a person there at all. If, on the other hand, he exhibited an evil disposition in the acts that brought him to the court, then to that extent he cannot be described as sick except in the loosest kind of way. Mr. Hinckley made a number of statements that are often taken as evidence of his being crazy: ". . . no amount of imprisonment or hospitalization can tarnish my historical deed . . . I'm sorry love has to be so painful." This kind of grandiose and sentimental mush is, I should have thought, very familiar in most people's lives when, as often happens, one's gestures are misunderstood. It's horrible, but not in the least crazy. And the evil aspect of the whole event, which lies in the irresponsible violence done to other people, is exactly what is always objectionable about any crime, the element for which punishment was instituted, as being a public declaration of principle and a remedy for the violation of right.

[The verdict] exploited the possibilities of evasion that have developed . . . as the idea of "madness" degenerates into a catchall for our prejudices.

The verdict may therefore plausibly be interpreted as a way of avoiding having to make a clear legal and moral judgment. It exploited the possibilities of evasion that have developed in proportion as the idea of "madness" degenerated into a catchall for our prejudices. But the jury was entirely right on at least one point: Aided by the discipline of the law, it took guilt and insanity to be exclusive categories, and it chose between them. The popular verdict would, presumably, have been Mr. Taylor's "sick and evil," a verdict, that is, of guilty *and* insane. But no act can be both these things in the same respect. Acts do, of course, have many aspects, and it is therefore tempting to think of someone as being both guilty *and* insane, just as Lord Byron was described as mad, bad, and dangerous to know. The genuinely difficult cases of this kind usually arise when people it is hard not to construe as maniacs hear supernatural voices calling upon them to perform dreadful acts. The Yorkshire Ripper case, tried in Britain in 1982, was a case of just this kind, and by no means unilluminating when compared with the Hinckley case. Peter Sutcliffe murdered and mutilated thirteen women, some of them prostitutes, and claimed to have been instructed to act thus by God himself. Psychiatrists were involved in the case before you could say "paranoid schizophrenia," but the jury found Mr. Sutcliffe guilty of murder, presumably on the grounds, as stated by the prosecution, that the psychiatric evidence was suspect "because it was based solely on what Sutcliffe had told the doctors . . . statements they had accepted from a known, accomplished and cunning liar."[12] And that, except in very rare cases of unmistakable dementia, would always seem to be the problem: that, as Chief Justice Brian said all those centuries ago, one cannot know the mind of a man, and that human beings especially when on trial for serious crimes are likely to be in the highest degree devious.

Crime and Punishment

In practice, given that the death penalty is now so much more remote and unlikely a consequence of being found guilty of murder, it does not greatly matter which way the verdict goes, so long as (to use the common formulation) "society is protected" against those who cannot manage their appalling impulses. Yet the wider political and cultural issues remain important because "guilt" and "insanity" are not merely characterizations of aspects of behavior but also proposals about how to treat those so characterized.

The guilty are *punished* by authorities (including, in the case of moral fault, such notional authorities as the conscience or the "superego"), but the insane are *treated* for their medical or pseudomedical condition by experts basing their claim to competence upon science. The problem is that there is no science to be scientific with. This is not, of course, to say that psychiatry is valueless, especially on its neurological and biochemical side. But the whole project of a science of the mind is obviously riddled with problems of many different types such as need not concern other types of medical specialist. Psychiatrists are like many other specialists in the human condition: The more optimistic among them live on hope and cheerfully tell us that "we do not yet know enough

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

about . . ." The problems are unlikely, however, to be merely a matter of accumulating the knowledge. Indeed, one might go further and suggest that a full-grown science of psychiatry would amount to such possibilities of control over human behavior as to constitute a powerful danger to freedom. But this is the least of contemporary anxieties.[13]

Even without much in the way of a solid science to guide them, psychiatry is often instinctively preferred to other options by many people who feel in their bones that it is more humane. The basis of this sentiment is often nothing much more sophisticated than the feeling that men in white coats are more likely to be caring and compassionate than prison warders, hangmen, and operators with thumbscrews. In practice, this may or may not be true, but what is certainly true is that it is a prejudice that ought to be carefully examined. It is not merely that the men in white coats are engaged in a kind of scientific imposture, but also that such treatment necessarily dehumanizes those it treats. In the case of the genuinely insane there is, in a sense, no person there to respond rationally, and this fact inevitably influences how they are treated; indeed, it may be the only way in which patients may have a chance of being cured. A verdict of insanity thus amounts to refusing to treat Mr. Hinckley as a person, a position at variance with his own more expansive claims to be, even better than a person, a world historical personality.

Moral Impositions

The question of whether Mr. Hinckley and others similarly situated are sane or not might well seem to be a matter of fact, even if a rather difficult one, and we do make a factual judgment as to whether such and such a person is capable of responding to us rationally or not. But as we have seen, these judgments are also proposals about how people ought to be treated. Nor is this point limited to the terms we have been discussing. Our whole vocabulary of moral responsibility depends upon a set of decisions we make about how to conduct our lives. To this extent, those who are sceptical of the moral point of view—they include Marxists, positivists, and many Freudians—are perfectly right in thinking that the moral view of human life, as we understand it in the West, is a deliberate construction which is imposed upon people. Responsibility is, in fact, as artificial as toilet training. It is something we start imposing upon the young from a very early age. The same thing is true of the whole set of ideas by which we construe the meaning of moral and legal responsibility: such ideas as individuality, forgiveness, and personal identity. These ideas are, of course, very liable to erupt into any sort of human life in one form or another, and even the most traditional civilization dedicated to absorbing the individual into the group—some Buddhist cultures, for example—must develop arguments about the illusoriness of an individuality likely to appear in any human society. These arguments are by no means dissimilar to those with which the modern therapeutic movement operates: They amount to insisting that man is essentially a part of some wider whole from which alone he gets any meaning he may have. Individuality is thus one of the possibilities open to the organization of human life, and clearly a socially disruptive one. But it has proved possible, as has happened in the West, to build a civilization upon exploring this very possibility. And the more a civilization depends upon developing this rather than other human potentialities, the more it will find ideas of guilt and responsibility indispensable. In using such ideas, it treats offenders as rational. There is obviously no point to *punishing* a dog or an inanimate object. We only punish those who can understand what is happening to them, and punishment is therefore supremely humane in a sense that medical treatment is not.

If this account of the moral life is true, then it follows that the idea that moral judgments are merely the expression of the less admirable attitudes of mind, and much inferior to scientific understanding, must be false.

We only punish those who can understand . . . and punishment is therefore supremely humane in a sense that medical treatment is not.

Moral judgments serve to orient us in relation to a great variety of rules, which we can never master in their entirety and which are perpetually shifting in response both to current sentiments and to the continuing process of moral argument. Censure is thus often informative. It proposes rules in terms of which we ought to judge our behavior, and it may at times be the office of friends to concern themselves with such things. In the decorum of friendship, of course, censorious bullying is entirely out of place, but this is a contingent matter of tact. It is one of the stranger fancies of the therapeutic impulse of our time that friends ought to accept each other totally, and without a critical thought. If this were to be taken as the criterion of friendship, then one's best friend would presumably be one's therapist: a fearful error. Moral judgments are thus a form of knowledge, and perhaps, as Socrates from a different perspective thought, the most important knowledge there is. In a Henry James novel, the heroine remarks that virtue is so boring. "What?" says the typical Jamesian hero. "Virtue? *Boring*?"

Man the Master

The Hinckley verdict is, in its small way, evidence of the manner in which our traditional moral understanding is being eroded by modes of thought that are difficult to characterize. They are positivist in claiming the warrant of science for what is, in fact, a new mode of living; therapeutic[14] in treating moral problems as exercises in the management of irrationality by experts; and ideological in purporting to reveal the social forces that, unknown to us, actually determine how we act. What they all share is a settled hostility to the traditional idea that a human act is to be taken as proceeding rationally from

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the will of an individual, and that in acting thus, an individual is choosing to characterize himself in a particular way before his fellows. Mr. Hinckley's act was thus rejected as a rational (and evil) decision and bundled into the nonentity of insanity. The traditional view we inherit is that human beings are creatures who make their own destinies according to self-chosen purposes within a complex set of rules: moral, religious, legal, and their personal sense of what is appropriate. And if this world is rationally organized, then, subject always to the intrusion of accidents, they must take the consequences. The jury, however, refused to take what Mr. Hinckley did as an *act,* in the full sense, at all. They chose to interpret his attempt to assassinate President Reagan as merely the symptom of a mental disorder. As it happens, the practical consequences of this decision vary little from what would have happened if they had found Mr. Hinckley guilty. But the cultural implications are very different indeed.

There is a direct connection between the view of man as conditioned by his environment . . . and a . . . potentially despotic government . . .

The central implication is that either human acts are expressions of the functioning of a healthy human organization, or they are symptoms of some pathology—either social or biological. It is generally assumed that human beings will behave in socially cooperative ways unless behavior is distorted by some force, or pressure (the metaphors are usually drawn from mechanics) operates to destroy a natural sociability. Insanity constitutes one group of such distortions, and the more sociological varieties have names like sexism, racism, competitiveness, and so on.

This set of challenges to the moral understanding of human life presents itself as forms of liberation from irrationality, alienation, prejudice, pathology, and the many veiled forms of oppression from which we suffer, yet their conjoint outcome is actually to present a picture of human beings as mindlessly mirroring their circumstances. All such theories agree in asserting that we are conditioned by society, parents, culture, the epoch we live in, television, and much else. Marxists, for example, argue that consumer demand, upon which capitalism is supposed to depend for its continuance, is guaranteed by the work of advertisers who *control* what we buy. They argue in a similar vein that such institutions as schools and the media *control* our thoughts. From another angle, human behavior is treated as epiphenomenal to biology. Again, feminists argue that more opportunities for women to enter into an appropriate profession are not enough: Women must be motivated by the provision of appropriate role models and surrounded by an appropriate set of images from childhood onward. In the social sciences there has developed a remarkable propensity to treat things called perceptions not as interpretations of the world about which we think, but images we pick up according to sociological and biological factors of which we are unaware. And all of this exploration of human irrationality is treated as if it were a new breakthrough of scientific understanding, rather than the revival in a modish form of a theory on which human affairs had long been managed. The classical statement of this general theory is to be found in Book III of Plato's *Republic.* It consists in the argument that the soul absorbs its surroundings, and it leads to a proposal for control of what citizens may hear and read.

The contrast to be elucidated is, then, between the moral point of view we have inherited and a variety of allied challenges. The moral view postulates (with, as we have noticed, some degree of artificiality) that human beings are active, autonomous, and responsible. And it is only if such assumptions have some truth that a liberal state is possible—where the term liberal covers all modern forms of constitutional government. By contrast, the moral point of view is challenged, in the name of realism, by those who argue that man is but the reflection and imitator of what he sees around him, and is thus potentially victimized by his environment. The implication of this view is that a wise government must act to control the seductive evils by which we are surrounded. There is thus a direct connection between the view of man as conditioned by his environment, on the one hand, and a strong, certainly authoritarian, and potentially despotic government, on the other. This connection is, of course, an abstract relation of ideas, but its reality may be attested by the character of totalitarian governments. But, one may well ask, who would do the controlling in our nontotalitarian circumstances?

The answer is to be found, I suggest, in a significant illogicality in the case for conditioning. That case could not even be presented if there were not a saving remnant that had in some way escaped the grip of the media, the lure of the advertiser, the seduction of role models, or the enfeebling passivity of surrounding perceptions. The conditioning theory of man as a pure imitator is thus marked not only by its dogmatism but also by its covert postulation of an elite who stand above the humanity thus characterized. It is in part, one may guess, this oblique self-flattering character of the conditioning theory that in part accounts for its popularity, especially among intellectuals, who are prone to feel that they have just groped through a fog and found the truth.[15]

The challenge to moral individualism offers us a bargain: It offers us a remission of sins by relieving us of the consequences of our acts, but it will ultimately demand payment in normative and political submission. Some, however, find this bargain thrust upon them. Such is Mr. Hinckley's position. Unable to construct a viable personhood for himself, he thought to make a home run in the game of life by a single wild stroke. He has declared his conscience clear, but a clear conscience in such circumstances is no real conscience at all. His fate is a necessary capitulation to the kind of domesticated humanhood a therapeutic society has prepared for him.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

References

1. *New York Times,* June 8, 1982.
2. As Irving R. Kaufman called him in the *New York Times Magazine,* August 8, 1982.
3. *New York Times,* May 26, 1982.
4. *The First Guidebook to Prisons and Concentration Camps of the Soviet Union,* by Avraham Shifrin (New York: Bantam Books, 1982), pp. 62–63, in a typical entry about the psychiatric hospital in the Kresty Prison in Leningrad records that in the KGB prison the interrogator constantly repeated, "Only the mentally ill would turn against the Soviet State" . . . "There I came to the realization that, in the USSR, making an anti-Soviet placard, praying to God, trying to leave the country, or not wanting to live at all—all meant the same thing. You were insane."
5. The idea that madness is peculiarly revelatory of our society, which is the ultimate cause of all human misery, will also be found on the wilder shores of psychiatry itself. Thus we learn that something called capitalism is seeking for total control over all human experience by way of the omnipresence of television. The aim of this sinister force is to "destroy the chance for people to generate their own culture by systematically expunging personal control over production and consumption, and eliminating, by a capacity to seemingly absorb all opposition, any sense that people can transcend the given society" (Joel Kovel, "The American Mental Health Industry," in David Engleby, ed., *Critical Psychiatry,* Penguin: Harmondsworth, 1982, p. 77). In the introduction the editor employs two sentences to reply to an objection that might occur to some readers: "Psychiatry in communist countries is beyond our scope, though one point should perhaps be made here to anticipate the inevitable objection that since the phenomena we are describing can also be found in communist countries, they have nothing to do with capitalism as such. To this we would argue that if such is indeed the case (and the analogies [sic] are by no means easy to establish), it reflects more the embryonic state of socialism in the countries concerned than the innocuousness of capitalism" (p. 14). It is reassuring that such opinions appear in respectable books of psychiatry and social analysis, for otherwise one could swear that they represented a paranoid delusional system.
6. *Punishment and Responsibility: Essays in the Philosophy of Law* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), pp. 187–188.
7. *New York Times,* June 13, 1982.
8. *Life of Johnson* (Oxford University Press, 1953), p. 417; October 19, 1769.
9. Including, notably, Mr. Hinckley himself, who imagines "the disgruntled masses" hell-bent on punishment of offenders rather than investigating the mental condition of such offenders. He goes on: "I can only respond with a shake of my head and the wish that society will some day show some compassion for its disturbed outcasts. Sending a John Hinckley to a mental hospital instead of prison is the American Way" (*Newsweek,* Sept. 30, 1982, p. 30).
10. Herbert Hart, *op. cit.,* p. 193–194.
11. "Too Much Justice," *Harper's,* Sept. 1982.
12. John Beattie, *The Yorkshire Ripper Story,* (London: Quartet, 1981), p. 156.
13. The most sustained critical examination of the condition of psychiatry has, of course, been presented by Thomas Szasz in a series of books following *The Myth of Mental Illness* in 1961.
14. For a wider view of the therapeutic movement, see Philip Rieff, *Triumph of the Therapeutic Faith after Freud,* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1966).
15. I have discussed the belief in social conditioning in "The Myth of Social Conditioning," *Policy Review,* 18, (Fall 1981).

Credits for photos in order of appearance: Library of Congress Z62-49519; Library of Congress B817-7773; Library of Congress B817-7798.

SURVEY
a journal of East & West studies

Founded in 1955, *Survey* has established a reputation as a leading publication in its field.

"Many publications are useful to persons writing on public affairs. A few publications, like *Survey,* are indispensable. It is among the best sources of information and analyses about the things that matter most to the West." **George F. Will**

"*Survey* has always been indispensable, but at a time when illusions about the nature of the Communist world are once again rampant, it is perhaps more necessary than ever before." **Norman Podhoretz**

"*Survey* is the most outstanding journal dealing with Eastern Europe and revolutionary change. It has been of interest both to specialists and to those interested in political change for over two decades. It deserves to be read widely." **Seymour Martin Lipset**

"I do not see how it is possible for anyone to pretend to follow current international affairs without reading *Survey* regularly." **Irving Kristol**

Annual Subscription: UK £17, US $39, elsewhere £20. Single copies: UK £5, US $11, elsewhere £6.

Editorial Office: Ilford House, 133 Oxford Street, London W1R 1TD, Great Britain
Subscription Office: 59 St. Martin's Lane, London WC2 4JS, Great Britain (Tel. 01-836 4194)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Andropov and His Soviet Union

Only these points about the man need to be made:

○ The first twenty years of Yuri Andropov's career, when he hacked his way up, were in the Stalin apparatus, and he had become one of the dictator's political hit men by the time of Stalin's death (after which he was demoted, with others, for what amounts to excessive Stalinism).

○ His success in taking power by no means indicates great brilliance, for the competition was of an extraordinarily low level of credibility, and even then it only lost by the accident of Brezhnev's death at the critical moment.

○ Internally, the campaign for discipline and against corruption, which has so impressed certain Western commentators, is a note that has been sounded half a dozen times before, without any except a temporary and cosmetic effect on the Soviet social and economic orders. To the extent that it is genuine, it marks a shallow and simple view of the problems; but in practice, as now, it has manifested itself largely as a weapon against the corruption of the losing faction merely.

○ The difference between Soviet leaders is not one between "hard" and "soft" in any substantial sense: The variation is, figuratively, no more than five or ten degrees of a 360-degree circle. Even this is a matter solely of tactics, not at all of even slightly more "liberal" aims. But within that narrow limit Yuri Andropov's style is hard rather than soft—which might perhaps be crucial in a delicately balanced situation.

○ He has not consolidated his position, which is weaker than that of any previous successor to power; he has very little in the way of a group of long-term clients and followers; and at his age he has very little time to make himself invulnerable. So the succession crisis will continue; and we may note that in previous succession periods there has been a turning inward and a relaxation of pressure against the outside world—at least presenting some prospects for the West if properly handled.

○ Western stories of Yuri Andropov's liberalism, open-mindedness, and sophistication have now faded away. Edward Jay Epstein's exposure in the *New Republic,* February 7, 1983, of the imaginary nature of the "human stories" about Mr. Andropov that proliferated six months ago hilariously demonstrates one of the ways in which the West seeks to deceive itself. (Epstein is wrong on only one point: The error he detects in Nikolai Sharigan's account is not Mr. Sharigan's but that of his interviewers.) But more horrible than the whisky-jazz-and-culture image was the instant outbreak of "expert" assertion that here at last was a Soviet leader after John Stuart Mill's heart. This discovery of "liberal" Soviet rulers has been repeated every time a change takes place at the top. Those who present it argue, indeed, that the U.S.S.R. is pretty liberal already, but that the newest man is more liberal yet. This sort of thing seems to fill some psychological need; at any rate it has no rational explanation or factual basis.

○ In fact we are faced, as usual, with deception or self-deception in the West on the part of those who would simply ignore the real background of men like Yuri Andropov. They pay no attention to the fact that he and his like are the products of a history quite alien to our own and are the exemplars of a political psychology of a type hardly seen in the West outside small sects of millenarian psychopaths. Indeed, though in the Soviet case the fact is disguised by Western-type suits and a vaguely Western-type vocabulary, the record and the motivations of a man like Mr. Andropov are as different from our own as those of any ayatollah.

○ That any of this should need saying is a sorry comment on the state not merely of knowledge but even of good sense among Westerners who feel empowered to advise on, or carry out, policy in the world today.

Robert Conquest

Marshall Goldman of the Harvard University Russian Research Institute has just brought out a book with the title *The USSR in Crisis: the Failure of an Economic System.*

But what is a crisis?

If it is a matter of what we in the West would call a crisis, certainly the U.S.S.R. is in a state of crisis. It has been, as Vladimir Bukovski points out, since November 7, 1917. After sixty years of "impetuous growth," of "uninterrupted progress," the *average* Soviet wage is, in purchasing power, half as large as the *minimum* wage in Brazil. A peasantry twice as numerous as the whole agricultural class of Western Europe and North America fails to feed the country adequately. Outside the military sector, the technological revolution has wholly failed. In sixty years the U.S.S.R. has not invented a medicine, a textile fiber, a plastic material, a salable computer. It is one of the rare countries where, as Dr. Feshbach has shown, the rate of infant mortality increases and life expectancy in general diminishes. So: Is the U.S.S.R. in crisis? Not at all, because what we call a crisis is not a crisis for them.

The aim of the Soviet government is not to increase prosperity or the standard of living. Its aim, which has not changed since 1917, is to "construct socialism" and to extend it over the whole world. And "true socialism" today controls in one form or another 40 percent of the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

world's population. As Stalin would say: "Lenin's testament has been executed with honor."

On Brezhnev's death, the Soviet economic system consisted of the following four elements:

- A machinery of power. Thanks to an adequate concentration of material and human resources, the U.S.S.R. is today able to create armed forces that are competitive with those of its principal adversary. Twenty years of frenzied arming and twenty years of propaganda and diplomatic maneuvers in favor of "detente" and the disarmament of others mean in fact that their forces actually surpass those of America (at least on paper) in proportions of up to four to one, depending on the type of armament. To the armed forces one must add the police, the propaganda apparatus, leadership of the international Communist movement, and finally an industrial base and research and development program mobilizing the Soviet capacity to its optimum.
- A machinery of control. It is a question of holding the population in a tight net, and this is what state farms, collective farms, and planning are for. There is nothing collective in the Kolkhozes, which are slave plantations; there is nothing planned in a plan that does not know the real costs and figures of production. But in this way they can supervise their subjects and give the impression that socialism is a reality. And finally, Gulag has its four million lodgers.
- An economy of tolerated enterprise. The peasant plot, the huge black market, theft at every level, the mafias that pullulate over the whole territory of the Soviet Union, fulfill various functions: to ensure the survival of the population, to provide the privileged with their luxuries, to help the factories mitigate the failures and muddles of planning, to buttress the urgent needs of the war economy.
- Western subsidization. This consists of stealing technology and thus sparing themselves the expense of research and development; of selling petrol, gold, arms, and raw materials; of buying at the best of prices the grain of America, the butter of the Common Market, and the machines of any seller; and of securing loans. These new resources ease the task of the government by mask ing the most dangerous inefficiences and strengthening the machinery of power.

Such are the four pillars of the system. Is it, then, in crisis? From the Soviet point of view, a crisis would mean:

- A failure of the machinery of power. The Soviet armed forces might be technologically outclassed.
- A loss of the effectiveness of the machinery of control. If living conditions in the country and in the cities fell below the bearable, the already low level of productivity might collapse, and who knows whether a disintegration of the Polish or Rumanian type might not follow next day.
- Galloping corruption. The mafias would end by controlling the party itself and directing the political decisions. The "second economy" would end by eating away the Soviet regime from within. Instead of the rule of ideology, we would have a sort of savage capitalism. Certainly such a regime would be infinitely better for the population than the Soviet regime, but it would *mean* the end of the latter and of the international Communist movement.
- The loss of Western subsidization.

These are the reefs through which Leonid Brezhnev navigated so cleverly. What can Yuri Andropov do? What is he doing?

A well-orchestrated campaign has represented him as a friend of reform, even as a cryptoliberal. This picture has no basis in fact. He has now been in power for six months and his policy is clear: It is a barely modified Brezhnevism.

There is no question of slowing the military effort. The whole Soviet system is directed toward power. That is all it can do. A change of direction would mean a change in its nature.

The machinery of control could be reined in, but instead Mr. Andropov has polished up a Stalinist panoply. That cannot lead to much. If you stop Soviet people evading work in the street, they will evade it in the factories. Perhaps the black market, and the various exchanges that allow the population to live and that produce true wealth, can be clamped down on. The economic effort would be negative. The gigantic scale of alcoholism would not be diminished, or the level of theft.

Yuri Andropov is trying to apply on a U.S.S.R. scale what his follower Geidar Aliyev tried in Azerbaijan in the sixties: to remove the most corrupt elements in the party and replace them by pure and tough men from the KGB. What will happen is what happened in Azerbaijan: The incorruptible will be corrupted in their turn. One cannot play one section of the party against another for long; they all have the same morals.

So far Mr. Andropov has been content to lock the rusty iron bolts tight again. The last ambitious approaches to *reforming* the system were Nikita Krushchev's. The party soon understood that those reforms would eventually lead to its losing power. Since then it has given up great projects. Yuri Andropov's reforms are, at the U.S.S.R. level, those of a concentration camp commandant: cut rations, increase discipline, raise the labor norms. These cannot be called reforms.

There remains the Western card so brilliantly played by Brezhnev. Can Mr. Andropov rely as much as his predecessor did on Western aid? The prospects are less promising.

Half of Soviet hard currency comes from the sale of oil. The price of oil is down. The Western banks have fewer petrodollars to recycle, and they are beginning to be disturbed at the hugeness of "socialist" debts. It will be less easy to borrow. Selling gold? It is a last resource. Arms? The buyers (like Libya) have less money and are perhaps less convinced by the quality of the weapons. Finally, there is a campaign afoot in the United States to guard against the technological pillage being committed by Soviet agencies, both legal and illegal.

If one adds that America *can* mobilize its immeasurable technological superiority and quite quickly put the Soviet army out of the running, the machinery of power is threatened. If there existed in the West reasonably strong political will power, informed with a clear understanding

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the Soviet world, then truly the future would be gloomy for Mr. Andropov, and one could speak of a crisis.

Still, in his shoes I should not be too worried. President Reagan will not last for ever. America's political will power is not unshakable, Europe's still less. Claude Cheysson is working on his European colleagues to lower the interest rates on Soviet borrowing. The West has already saved the Soviet regime in 1921 (the Hoover mission), in 1941 (lend-lease), and several times since World War II. And if the goose that lays the golden eggs becomes less generous, one can always wring its neck. Central America is aflame. There are four Communist ministers in Paris. As one of Aragon's characters says, "You see, comrades, there is no reason for despair."

Alain Bésançon

Mrs. Facing-Both-Ways

Somebody once said of Harold Wilson, the erstwhile British Prime Minister, "There are two things I don't like about Wilson: his face." The double-dealing of India's Prime Minister Indira Gandhi qualifies her for a similar epithet.

Mrs. Gandhi made quite an impression when she visited the United States last July. Diplomats agreed she had swallowed pride to make the trip, the first to these shores in eleven years, and visions of renewed Indo-American kinship were articulated by political sages. Plaudits for Mrs. Gandhi echoed on the networks, in the print media, even on the south lawn of the White House, where on July 29 President Reagan toasted Mrs. Gandhi for joining him in "a dialogue of discovery."

She replied, "Our foreign policy is one of friendship for all, hence nonalignment," later adding, "We do not want one friendship [with the Soviet Union] to obstruct another friendship [with the United States]. We are friends with the Soviet Union . . . but this does not affect our overall policy of coexistence with as many countries as possible."

There were no volatile issues for Mrs. Gandhi and Mr. Reagan to discuss. The only specific disagreement—over U.S. refusal to supply enriched uranium to India's Tarapur atomic power plant without India's acceptance of "full scope safeguards"—had been eliminated when France contracted to supply the fuel.

Mrs. Gandhi had several concerns to press on Mr. Reagan. She was worried about increasing chumminess between the United States, China, and Pakistan: Indian strategists have long regarded this tripartite alliance as disastrous to her national security. She wanted more money from America for the International Development Association, which is suffering from budget cutbacks. She argued for more U.S. investment in India, insisting that it was profitable despite high local tax rates. She objected to U.S. arms sales to Pakistan, which she felt exacerbated the Asian equilibrium just when a peace pact between India and Pakistan was all but imminent.

But Mrs. Gandhi's American trip was primarily a public relations move. She didn't have a shopping list of Third World "wants," sometimes claimed as Third World "rights." Mrs. Gandhi most urgently wished to clarify India's controversial foreign policy of nonalignment, to insist that India was not a vassal state of the Soviet Union, and to convince Mr. Reagan that India's friendships with the United States and the Soviet Union need not be mutually exclusive.

Apparently, she succeeded. President Reagan seemed charmed by Mrs. Gandhi's rhetoric. The media forgot all about Mrs. Gandhi's refusal to condemn the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and spoke exuberantly about a new crest in Indo-American relations. The new U.S. consensus was that, in Mrs. Gandhi's words, "nonalignment gives depth to India's independence and self-reliance for it enables [India] to retain her freedom of judgment and action on international issues."

But soon after Indira Gandhi returned from the United States, she made a little-noticed trip to the Soviet Union. And if the U.S. trip was symbolic of a new crest, the Soviet rendezvous was an occasion to strike new bargains and to pledge to the Soviets that no illicit hugging had gone on while Mrs. Gandhi was with President Reagan. Mrs. Gandhi's Soviet trip was, as one Indian columnist wryly said, "a vow of allegiance, an assurance to Moscow of India's fidelity to her goals and programs despite Mrs. Gandhi's American junket."

Glorious Daughter of India

Mrs. Gandhi was in Russia from September 20 to 26. During that time she had extensive discussions with then-President Brezhnev, Prime Minister Nikolai Tikhonov, Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, and KGB boss Yuri Andropov. She spoke of "the garden of friendship" between India and the Soviet Union, a garden that she said "will continue to yield fruit for as long as we can foresee."

At the Kremlin Mrs. Gandhi told Brezhnev, "We want to ensure that our friendship retains its strength and relevance in the years to come. We must give no sustenance to those who try and weaken it." She accepted Soviet references to her as "a glorious daughter of Asia" and "a goddess in our time" and was pleased to learn that thousands of young Russian girls now bore the name Indira.

At the end of the Soviet trip a nine-page joint declaration was issued by India and the U.S.S.R. Four pages were devoted to proposals for disarmament, including calls for a "nuclear freeze" on the production and deployment of atomic weapons, and demands for a "no-first-use declaration" from countries having nuclear arms. The joint declaration also condemned bacteriological and chemi-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cal warfare—ironic in view of the Soviet Union's own use of chemical weapons in Asia.

But India's acquiescence in a joint statement on Afghanistan was most troubling. New Delhi and Moscow agreed that "the problems of the region demand peaceful political solutions paying full respect to the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, and nonaligned status of the countries of the region" and that "India and the Soviet Union reiterate their opposition to all forms of outside interference in the internal affairs of countries of the region."

In the United States Mrs. Gandhi had said, "We do not want one friendship to obstruct another friendship," and that was enough to bring on cheers from U.S. pundits and pressmen. Mrs. Gandhi knew that not much was needed to secure American foreign aid, which exceeds aid to India from the rest of the world and comes with few, if any, strings attached.

Nor is American aid seemingly mitigated by constant denunciations of the United States and capitalism by Indian politicians, who pocket American handouts while blaming the U.S. for apartheid, Israeli aggression, and world poverty. Of course, India uses American money not for private enterprise but to bolster her flagging form of democratic socialism, which is proving to be an oxymoron.

India complains about the Pakistani threat, but she spends $5.12 billion on defense, compared with $1.54 billion spent by Pakistan. India has enough armaments that a war with Pakistan would last no more than a few weeks. India's fears about U.S. sales of forty F-16 planes to Karachi are irrelevant; the real question is whether a poverty-stricken nation like India can afford to spend so much on arms, including nuclear weapons.

Hugging the Bear

Mrs. Gandhi's receipts from the Soviet Union do not come cheap. She knows that but operates in a family tradition of adulation for Moscow; her father Jawaharlal Nehru, for example, lavishly praised the U.S.S.R. for economic and social development. Mrs. Gandhi feels that her alliances are cut out for her, that U.S. support for Pakistan means she has nowhere to turn but Moscow, and she perhaps sees that there is no easy way out of the Kremlin bear hug.

India and the Soviet Union established diplomatic relations on April 13, 1947, even before India got her independence from the British. Economic ties began with India's first five-year plan, and in the twenty-seven years since then nearly eighty-five projects in metallurgy, oil, coal, power, pharmaceuticals, agriculture, and education have been launched.

India is the biggest trading partner of the Soviet Union among the developing countries. Indian exports to the U.S.S.R. rose fivefold from 1970 to 1981. Imports jumped nearly tenfold. Since 1964 the Soviet Union has been the largest arms supplier to India, although India has also bought from Britain, France, and West Germany. Since 1970 between 50 and 75 percent of India's arms imports each year have come from the Soviet Union.

India signed her first friendship treaty with Russia in 1971. The two countries adopted a long-term program of trade, scientific, and technical cooperation in March 1979, a program that has "no parallel in the relations between a developed and developing country," in the words of Girish Mathur, an Indian political correspondent.

In May 1980 New Delhi and Moscow signed a $1.6 billion arms agreement, which is worth twice that amount because it is in the form of loans payable over seventeen years at 2.5 percent.

The Price of Love

I visited India recently and spoke with some military and industrial personnel. They are not naive about Soviet expectations and treat as only natural India's waffling on Afghanistan, her prompt recognition of Vietnamese surrogates in Kampuchea, her implementation of Soviet foreign policy objectives, and her reluctant purchase of faulty and expensive Soviet machinery along with pacts for Soviet operators and repairmen to run it. Apparently, Moscow has successfully mandated that in return for aid, India will stick to nonalignment rhetoric, abstain from criticizing Soviet moves in Afghanistan or elsewhere, and content herself with mediocre Soviet industrial supplies.

Mrs. Gandhi's trip to Moscow "cemented old ties, and opened up new avenues for further cooperation," in the words of the *Indian Express* (September 28, 1982). It brought, in addition to the nine-page joint statement, some concrete transactions. India and Russia agreed to boost their trade turnover beyond the twofold increase planned between 1981 and 1985. Moscow agreed to buy 500 million meters of Indian textiles. It also offered India a 1,000-megawatt nuclear power plant. In 1984 the Soviets will permit Indian cosmonauts to undertake a joint flight into space.

The Soviets were generous with India this time around, and it is not difficult to see why. India was hosting the 1983 Summit of Nonaligned Countries and will assume the chairmanship of the nonaligned movement for the next three years. The press hailed the summit as a show of moderation, but in fact it denounced the United States eleven times and the Soviet Union, not once. Resolutions called for disarmament and challenged the U.S. claim to the vital Diego Garcia nuclear base. Although the summit called for a halt to foreign intervention in Afghanistan, the assumption was that both Soviet and Western troops were involved, and the wording of this petition is almost identical to the joint declaration on Afghanistan signed by India and the U.S.S.R. last September.

So it should be clear that Mrs. Gandhi is committed to the Soviet Union, and though she wants more American investments and foreign aid and a pledge not to sell planes to Pakistan, she is not willing to compromise her Soviet allegiance for them. Rather, it seems, Mrs. Gandhi is trying to con the United States into meeting her needs while overlooking her Soviet trysts. Judging from American reaction to Mrs. Gandhi's visit, and subsequent postmortem claims, she has succeeded beyond her wildest expectations.

Dinesh D'Souza

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Roots of Italian Terrorism

Since its unification in 1860 at the Risorgimento, three great events have deeply affected the Italian nation: the defeat at Adowa in 1896, when the Abyssinians fought fiercely under their emperor, Menelek, and forced Italy to abandon its claim to an Italian protectorate in Ethiopia; the disastrous retreat at Caporetto in 1917, when Austrian troops shattered the Italian army, killing 40,000, taking 275,000 prisoners, and pushing the Italian line back to the Piave River; and the armistice of September 8, 1943, when Mussolini was defeated. These were not just severe trials and tragic experiences. Behind each event looms not only the end of a great national dream but also the menacing ghost of Italian decadence,

This divorce between highly proclaimed ideals and the down-to-earth aims of daily life accustomed Italians to being . . . radically amoral.

the old and unconquered disease of Italian society. It is this decadence that explains the feeling of tragic necessity characteristic of Italian nationalism.

But the pessimism is apparently belied by the facts. Adowa did not prevent Italy from entering, only a few years later, one of its most prosperous and dynamic periods. Caporetto did not prevent the country from surging in the following months with a show of will that is one of the most beautiful pages in its history. And September 8, 1943, did not hamper the extraordinary social and economic development of the fifties and sixties. The economic miracle of those years apparently proved that the obsessions of Italian nationalists were entirely unfounded, that moral and national issues were not, as they thought, intimately linked. That is how Italians came to think that Italy could exist without being national, that a national pride, far from being necessary, could damage its survival, development, and prosperity.

Examined more closely, however, the last great defeat reveals one vital difference. Although the defeat at Adowa was redeemed by the conquest of Tripolitania fifteen years later, and the defeat at Caporetto was redeemed by the resistance on the Piave River and by the counterattack at Vittorio Veneto in October 1918, the political and moral disaster of September 8, 1943, is unredeemed. It is a judgment without appeal because it was pronounced on Italy not so much by foreigners as by Italians themselves. After September 8, Italians relinquished all desire to be a truly national community, inspired by great collective ambitions and a higher solidarity. They became again a mere sum of individual interests camping on the same territory, held together by habit and utilitarian motives. Italians were once again united and yet divided against themselves, candidly shrewd and innocently cynical, according to the only existential lesson that they had fully learned from their history.

Of course, some Italians did try to infuse their compatriots with a sense of mission and national destiny. The democratic parties—whose definition left out the Communist party until the seventies—offered to the nation two great myths: the Resistance and Europe. And the Communist party offered the myths of the Resistance and revolution. The myth of the Resistance, as conceived by the democratic parties and by the Communists, meant the people in arms against internal and external enemies, and it implied that Italians could fight gallantly as long as the goals were within the traditions and ideals of the Risorgimento. As seen by the democratic parties, the Resistance redeemed the country from a defeat for which it was not morally responsible and gave Italy the moral authority to contribute, with other European nations, to the creation of a new motherland—a united Europe. As seen by the Communist party, it fulfilled the popular promise of the Risorgimento that the national ruling class had deliberately suffocated or repressed; and it foreshadowed the great proletarian revolution to which the "new party" was committed under its leader, Palmiro Togliatti (1893–1964). So, although differently interpreted, the Resistance was a consoling myth because it allowed Italy to explain and justify its past and its defeat. Similarly, Europe and revolution were the two great prospects, offered by the democratic parties and the Communists, respectively, so that the country could believe in its mission and destiny.

Disappointed Hopes

These three myths failed. The Resistance never became a national legend. Confined to a few areas of northern and central Italy, opposed or suspiciously regarded by large sections of the public, subject to different and virtually contradictory interpretations, it exhausted its educational value with a few rhetorical formulas that today stir a superficial echo in the national psychology.

Europe, on the other hand, stirred great enthusiasm. It pleased modernizers because it offered the country the natural framework within which it could hope to solve the economic and social problems of development. It pleased moderate and liberal nationalists because it put Italy on the same standing as other European countries and called them all to a common task. It pleased Catholics because it would restore the great Christian empire of the Middle Ages. And it pleased conservatives because it meant a strong bulwark against the Communist threat. But by the second half of the sixties, Europe was already a forlorn hope. De Gaulle's accession to power in 1958, the selfishness of national pressure groups in the community, the wearing debates on the community's attitude to Great Britain, Great Britain's delaying tactics once inside the community, and other factors emptied the great Eu-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ropean promise of its moral and political significance.

One could always hope for revolution. But the Communist party, while stating its necessity, refrained from it. The declared reason was the political realism of the Communist party—the argument, frequently advanced by Togliatti, that revolution was impossible in a country on the western side of the border dividing capitalist from socialist Europe. This alleged realism, however, hid an unavowed reason: the Communist party's subordination to the political strategy of the U.S.S.R. Thus the Italian Communist party renounced its independence and made an Italian revolution dependent on the interests of a foreign country. The party of revolution had become the party of the status quo.[1]

Three disappointed hopes, three myths that failed. We may add a fourth: the great rejuvenating myth of Christian humanism. Busy with managing economic development and afraid of losing power, Christian Democrats soon renounced the political ideals of the great spiritual movement with which they had identified themselves. The party that during the first half of the century had absorbed profound spiritual insights—Loisy's modernist experience, Maritain's Thomism, and Mounier's personalism—became a party of political managers, without moral tension and ideals, a manipulator of votes and political lobbies.

The failure of these myths and hopes did not remove them from Italian politics and consciousness. They came to represent what we may call, using a Marxist expression, the "Italian ideology." The result was a sort of gigantic collective schizophrenia. The official country spoke of Resistance, Europe, revolution, and Christian renewal, as if those myths were still alive and active; the real country behaved like the Italy of Renaissance historian Francesco Guicciardini, pursuing the hedonistic goals of a consumer society. Those myths, in other words, were institutionalized, frozen, transformed into a liturgy. They were meant to be the heart of the country, its *raison d'être,* its self-portrait and conscience; they became hearts of stone. This divorce between highly proclaimed ideals and the down-to-earth aims of daily life accustomed Italians to being what they had frequently been in their history: deeply and radically amoral. If daily behavior never coincides with the ideal principles that a society claims, every behavior becomes possible and legitimate. It is this divorce that lies at the root of the scandals and crime waves that have tormented the country: kidnappings in Lombardy and Calabria, Mafia collusion in the economic contracts in Campania after the earthquake, the alliance between crime and terrorism in Italian jails.

Workers' Frustrations

Not all Italians, however, have chosen Guicciardini's *particulare.* We thus come to the subject of terrorism. Toward the end of the sixties, the Italian divorce between words and deeds became, for a number of Italians, glaring and unbearable. On a national level the consumer society, which the governing parties had offered the country as a daily *ersatz* for their highly proclaimed ideals, proved incapable of satisfying the growing expectations of newly emerging classes. Italian students, having been admitted to the universities in numbers that soon unsettled the universities' structure, discovered that the gift they had received was valueless and their social promotion deceptive. In France in May 1968, such anger and disappointment did not go beyond the universities. But in Italy at the end of 1967, when the first symptoms of the students' revolution appeared, the students found powerful allies in the new generations of the working class, especially in Milan and Turin. This new class, of southern and peasant stock, was thrown all too quickly into an environment that was entirely foreign to its traditions and culture, and it experienced disappointment and frustrations not unlike those of the university students. Hence they formed an alliance that marked the social situation in Italy until the end of the seventies.

Under different circumstances the parties of the left would have been able to regiment the workers and students within their organizations and thereby to check their expectations and protests. The Communist party, in particular, might have again played the conservative role that it had conveniently assumed in the immediate postwar period, when it preached revolution as a distant aim, and urged young people to wait with patience within the ranks.

Compared with such concrete revolutionary prospects, the Communist party's revolution became an empty and ludicrous slogan, a mere trick . . .

At the end of the sixties, however, this institutionalized revolution was apparently within grasp elsewhere: in Latin America, where Guevara had tried to mobilize the rural masses; in Vietnam, where the revolutionary forces managed to resist the greatest military power of the world; in China, where Mao urged the people to bomb the party's headquarters; and even within the Soviet bloc, where Dubcek and Gierek were lending an attentive ear to the demand for self-government from the Czech and Polish working classes. We know now that those phenomena were heterogeneous and that each can only be understood within its particular historical context. In those years, however, they appeared to belong to history's grand design. Compared with such concrete revolutionary prospects, the Communist party's revolution became an empty and ludicrous slogan, a mere trick, a sort of people's opium.

This picture would not be complete, however, if we did not return briefly to the promise of Christian renewal that had been an integral part of the Italian ideology. We know that the Christian Democrats, absorbed by the cares of power, had in effect renounced that ideal. But the social function of the ideals that Christian Democracy was abandoning for more immediate and concrete objectives was still performed by the Catholic church, at the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

time the faithful and efficient ally of the party. Not unlike the Communist party, the church played a useful conservative role by checking and organizing the expectations of the rural masses and certain young intellectuals. Not unlike the Communist party, the church tempered its own revolutionary message by preaching, through the incessant educational work of the parish priest, the necessary compromises with the laws of the state and with the requirements of social coexistence. The late sixties, however, were the years when the Catholic church went through one of its most serious institutional crises. Whether the great cultural revolution begun under the papacy of John XXIII and planned by the Vatican Council has benefited the church is a matter for discussion elsewhere. I shall only observe that it had a double result. First, it encouraged the students' and workers' protest because some priests, defying the hierarchy, offered renewal and revolution not as remote targets but as goals within reach. Second, it prevented the church from playing its traditional conservative role because it was tormented by its own institutional crisis and much less attentive to Italian politics than in previous years.

Italian terrorism was born here, at the crossroads of an unredeemed defeat, the loss of national pride, and many unkept promises: the hedonistic one of the consumer society, the revolutionary one of the Italian Communist party, and the spiritual one of Christian Democracy and the Catholic church. The biography of terrorists and intellectuals who have explained and justified the terrorist option frequently reveals a double root, Christian and Marxist. Their cultural and political progress is often marked by the same stages: the small Christian groups following in the footsteps of the Vatican Council, the youth organizations of the Communist party, the Marxist or libertarian "groupuscules" proliferating in the universities after 1968, and finally the clandestine organizations of the "armed party."

The lack of national pride—the only ideal that could give a moral sense to the coexistence of 55,000,000 people on a peninsula of 300,000 square kilometers—produced the double barbarity of which Italians have been spectators and actors during the last years: the corruption of public life and terrorism.

We now understand that the moral and civic renewal of the Italian people was a national question, to be solved through the creation of a national community with great collective ambitions and a high concept of its own mission. We now understand how national pride, jealously and lovingly nurtured, was morally necessary to maintain and strengthen the national enterprise that was so precariously accomplished during the second half of the last century.

Positive signs have recently emerged from Italian public life. Optimism, however apparently justified, would be at variance with the pessimism that is one of the great virtues of the Italian Risorgimento. To fight and defeat its own barbarity, Italy must regain consciousness of its own identity, international role, and rights. Italy must understand that salvation never comes from the outside and that the salvation of Italians can only come from a moral brotherhood, from a collective enterprise, and from a proud presence in the world.

Sergio Romano

1. Cf. the interview of philosopher Augusto Del Noce with Alfredo Todisco, "Dietro di noi un Risorgimento perduto," *Il Corriere della sera,* Milan, October 11, 1981. Del Noce stressed the link between moral issues and national issues that underlies my analysis.

Encounter

Britain's leading review of current affairs and the arts

"ENCOUNTER is a magazine which constantly provides, in any given month, exactly what a great many of us would have wished to read . . . There is no other journal in the English-speaking world which combines political and cultural material of such consistently high quality."
Observer (London)

"One of the few great beacons of English-language journalism . . . a model of how to present serious writing." *International Herald Tribune*

"With considerable distinction, ENCOUNTER continues to fill a gap in English journalism in a way no other journal can remotely rival."
Spectator (London)

"It combines broadmindedness, seriousness and journalistic professionalism in a way that is not matched on either side of the Atlantic. It is now probably the one indispensable intellectual magazine." *Toronto Daily Star*

£1.30 ($3.25) per copy from leading newsagents
or direct from the publishers (postage 40p/$1.00)
Annual subscription £15.75 ($36.50 surface, $46.00 air)

ENCOUNTER 59 ST. MARTIN'S LANE **LONDON WC2**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Banking on Crisis

Brian Griffiths

"I do not minimize the pressures on the international financial system and the implicit risks. Those risks in the most immediate sense are financial and economic, but they could potentially be broader, affecting the cohesion and political relationship of the entire Western world."
Paul Volcker, Chairman, U.S. Federal Reserve System

The word crisis is arguably one of the most devalued expressions in the vocabulary of modern economics. A crisis now refers to any unexpected large movement in a market price, such as the exchange rate, interest rates, or the stock market, or to any adverse development in the economy, such as sharply rising unemployment or downturns in gross domestic product, whether expected or not. Whereas previously a crisis was a momentary event, a typical modern balance of payments or inflationary crisis may last for months or even years. Yet despite the abuse of the term and the lavish use of such phrases as "chronic," "nightmare," "financial collapse," and "toppling of the financial system" to describe the problems of the international banking system, the present situation could with some justification be termed a crisis. The dictionary definition of crisis is "turning point, especially of disease; moment of danger or suspense in politics, commerce, etc." Few can doubt that the announcements by the Polish government in early 1981, the Mexican government in August 1982, and the Brazilian government late last year that they were effectively broke and therefore unable to repay enormous amounts of interest and principal owed to Western banks, constituted moments of danger and suspense both to individual banks and to the world banking system as a whole, and that on reflection the whole episode will prove to be a turning point in the evolution of the international financial system. Central bankers are not normally given to overstatement, especially not the exaggeration of any difficulties there might be in the financial system. Thus the opening words of Paul Volcker, who sees the crisis as having a potential impact on the entire Western world, need to be taken seriously.

But what exactly is a banking crisis? If the present situation is so serious, why is it that no major Western bank has gone bust and that the world economy now looks poised for recovery? In any case, how did the banks get themselves into the present mess? And finally, what are the possible solutions to the present problems and what are their respective advantages and disadvantages?

Sound banking depends on confidence. If depositors are to keep their funds in a particular bank, they must be assured of two things: first, that the bank is solvent, so that the total value of its assets, made up of loans to individuals, companies, and governments, whether in domestic or foreign currency, is greater than the total claims it faces from depositors; and second, that the bank is liquid, so that if depositors wish to withdraw their funds, their demands will be met. If a bank is insolvent, it is technically bankrupt and will cease to do business. If a bank is short of cash, it will be illiquid, but it may still be solvent. From time to time all banks face temporary

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

An 1875 lithograph.

shortages of cash and in these situations borrow cash on a short-term basis either in the market for bank cash (the interbank market) or from the central bank. The function of the interbank market is to enable banks with excess cash to dispose of their funds on a temporary basis to other banks that are temporarily short. The alternative is for the bank to borrow from the central bank, which will lend to it at a penal rate in its function as lender of last resort to the banking system. If the system as a whole is short of cash, then the central bank, by purchasing securities from the market, is able to increase the cash held in the banking system.

From an analytical perspective, therefore, it might seem as if there are two kinds of banking crisis: the one resulting from a shortage of liquidity in the system, and the other resulting from a lack of solvency; the first the result of mismanagement by the central bank, and the other the consequence of mismanagement by private banks. In practice, such a distinction gets quickly blurred. A shortage of liquidity, resulting from inept monetary policy, will tend to produce a loss of confidence by depositors, the withdrawal of deposits, higher interest rates, and therefore lower prices for government bonds and bills (which are held by banks as secondary liquidity), as well as a slowdown in real economic activity accompanied by corporate bankruptcies.

The classic case of this kind of banking crisis was the experience of the United States between 1929 and 1933. In fact, during this time there were three specific crises—October 1930, March 1931, and early 1933. The shortage of cash in the banking system was such that between August 1929 and March 1933 the money stock in the United States fell by more than one third. As a result of voluntary liquidation, mergers, and consolidations, the number of commercial banks in the United States during this time fell by more than one third. For example, in November 1930, 256 banks failed, followed in December by another 352. In the next crisis, between August 1931 and January 1932, the period just before and following Britain's leaving the gold standard, no fewer than 1,860 banks suspended their operations, holding between them $1.449 billion of deposits. In late 1932 and early 1933 banking holidays were declared in more than half the states, and in March 1933 a one-week nationwide banking holiday closed not only all commercial banks but the Federal Reserve system as well. Following this episode, 2,000 banks went out of business. Although some banks may have exercised poor judgment in making loans in the late twenties and therefore some bank failures occurred because of mismanagement, according to Friedman and Schwartz in their classic monetary history of the United States, their likely number, though significant, would not have been catastrophic. The real cause of the trouble was the inability of the Federal Reserve to increase cash in the banking system in response to the massive panic switching of deposits for currency by the general public.

In a similar way, potential insolvency on the part of banks has liquidity implications. The fact that the quality of certain loans may be deteriorating due to the inability of borrowers to repay means that the cash flow to the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bank is impaired and that depositors will wish to transfer their funds to other banks. If banks wish to restore liquidity through the interbank market, they may well find that the rates they have to pay to attract deposits is higher, the increase representing a premium associated with higher risk. This process happened during the "fringe-bank crisis" in the United Kingdom in 1973–74, for international banks following the collapse of the Herstatt bank in 1974, and more recently following the problems of Latin American countries. If banks are thought to be insolvent, they will find it difficult to borrow from the interbank markets at any price, in which case they will be either bailed out by the central bank or forced into liquidation. A case that involved a combination of both occurred in Brazil earlier this year. As a result of Mexican default and the fear that Brazil would find itself in a similar position, $4 billion of deposits were lost from Brazilian banks over a few months, money-market credit lines were cut, and the banks themselves had to pay 1 percent over the London interbanks' rates, which in terms of traditional differentials in this market was very high indeed. Again, in 1981 the Polish foreign trade bank lost about $500,000,000 of deposits in a matter of weeks when it became known that the country would be forced to reschedule its debts. In both cases the deposit drain obviously aggravated the problem. As a result, over the past year leading central banks have effectively instructed leading commercial banks not to cut credit lines to banks of debtor countries, even though such action might have been considered prudent from a private banking point of view.

Mismanagement

The appropriate action that a central bank should take during a banking crisis will depend on the cause of the problem. If the system is threatened because of a shortage of liquidity and in particular the desire of the public to be more liquid and increase their holdings of cash, then the central bank should buy government bonds and bills in the respective markets. This would immediately halt the development of a possible domino process and restore confidence among investors. In many domestic banking systems, following the example of the United States in 1933, compulsory deposit insurance has been introduced to prevent panic behavior by depositors. Under these schemes banks have to compulsorily insure deposits up to a certain amount in money terms. This means that if a particular bank were to go bust, depositors' funds would be secure up to that amount. No such system as this exists in the Eurocurrency markets, and therefore prompt open-market operations on the part of the central bank are crucial to preserving the liquidity of the system. In addition to this there is no well-specified lender-of-last-resort function in the Eurocurrency markets, as there typically is in a domestic banking system.

If, however, the problem is potential insolvency because of mismanagement by an individual bank, then the appropriate policy response would be to let that particular institution go into liquidation.

The dimensions of the present problem can be seen from a few basic statistics. Lending by the developed countries to the LDCs[1] grew enormously in the 1970s. In 1973 net size of the Eurocurrency markets, through which most bank lending to the LDCs takes place, was $160 billion; by September 1982 it had grown to $940 billion. The OECD[2] estimates that total borrowing by LDCs grew from $220 billion in 1976 to $626 billion in 1982. At the beginning of the last decade LDC borrowing from both the banks and the capital markets was very limited. Two thirds of their external borrowing was trade related, associated with stabilization schemes linked to the International Monetary Fund, or related to the financing of specific projects, but this category accounted for very little indeed.

Two factors accounted for the explosion of LDC borrowing in the 1970s. One was the remarkable growth

TABLE 1

External debt owed to banks by 21 major LDC borrowers (end of June 1982 in billions of dollars).

	BIS-Reporting Banks*	U.S. Banks	
		All	9 Large
LATIN AMERICA			
Argentina	$ 25.3	$ 8.8	$ 5.6
Brazil	55.3	20.5	12.3
Chile	11.8	6.1	3.3
Colombia	5.5	3.0	2.1
Ecuador	4.7	2.2	1.3
Mexico	64.4	25.2	13.6
Peru	5.2	2.3	1.3
Venezuela	27.2	10.7	7.1
subtotal	$199.4	$ 78.9	$46.7
ASIA			
Indonesia	$ 8.2	$ 2.4	$ 1.9
Korea	20.0	9.2	5.1
Malaysia	5.3	1.3	1.0
Philippines	11.4	5.3	3.7
Taiwan	6.4	4.4	2.7
Thailand	4.8	1.7	1.0
subtotal	$ 56.1	$ 24.3	$15.4
MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA			
Algeria	$ 7.7	$ 1.2	$ 0.8
Egypt	5.4	1.5	1.0
Israel	6.1	2.6	1.4
Ivory Coast	3.2	0.5	0.4
Morocco	3.7	0.9	0.7
Nigeria	6.7	1.2	0.9
Turkey	4.0	1.4	0.9
subtotal	$ 36.8	$ 9.2	$ 6.2
TOTAL OF 21 LDCs	$292.3	$112.5	$68.3
ALL LDCs (excluding offshore banking centers)	$347.5	$125.5	$77.7
21 LDCs AS PERCENT OF ALL LDCs	84%	90%	88%

*Bank for International Settlements.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

performance of the most successful LDCs through the 1960s and 1970s. During this period real output in the LDCs grew at an annual average rate of 5½ percent while growth rates in industrial countries averaged only 3 to 4 percent. These averages mask the outstanding performance of certain countries. A number of the newly industrializing countries, such as Mexico, Brazil, and Korea, achieved even faster rates of growth and pursued policies that encouraged foreign investment. The other factor was the first oil price shock of December 1973, which created large surpluses for OPEC countries (from $7 billion in 1973 to $68 billion in 1974), deficits for oil-consuming LDC countries ($11 billion deficit in 1973 to $45 billion in 1975), and the need to recycle petrodollars from the former to the latter. Between 1975 and 1979 bank lending to twenty-one key leading LDC borrowers grew at an annual rate of over 30 percent.

TABLE 2

Estimated gross external debt (end of 1982 in billions of dollars) and debt service (1983) expressed as a percent of exports* for LDC borrowers.

	Gross External Debt	Debt Service	
		Total	Excluding Rollover of Short-Term Debt
LATIN AMERICA			
Argentina	$ 38.0	154%	88%
Brazil	85.5	117	67
Chile	17.2	104	54
Colombia	10.3	95	38
Ecuador	6.6	102	58
Mexico	80.1	126	59
Peru	11.5	79	47
Venezuela	29.5	101	25
subtotal	$278.1	117%	56%
ASIA			
Indonesia	$ 25.4	28%	14%
Korea	36.0	49	17
Malaysia	10.4	15	7
Philippines	16.6	79	33
Taiwan	9.3	19	6
Thailand	11.0	50	19
subtotal	$108.8	36%	14%
MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA			
Algeria	$ 16.3	35%	30%
Egypt	19.2	46	16
Israel	26.7	126	26
Ivory Coast	9.2	76	34
Morocco	10.3	65	36
Nigeria	9.3	28	14
Turkey	22.8	65	20
subtotal	$113.8	58%	16%
TOTAL OF 21 LDCs	$501.2	71%	30%

*Interest on gross debt plus all maturing debt, including amortization of medium- and long-term debt and all short-term debt expressed as a percent of exports, including net private transfer payments.

As a result, the situation in 1982 for leading LDCs can be seen from Tables 1 and 2. The comparable figures for Comecon countries for 1982 are Poland, $25 billion; Romania, $10 billion; Hungary, $9 billion; and Russia, $18 billion. Not only are the absolute debt figures very large, but lending to the LDCs is concentrated among a few key borrowers, especially Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Venezuela, Indonesia, and Korea for the LDCs and Poland for Comecon countries. It can also be seen from Table 1 that a good deal of Brazilian and Mexican debt to U.S. banks is due in fact to only nine banks. Total external debt as a percentage of exports for the LDCs rose very rapidly between 1979 and 1982 from 132 to 172 percent for the leading twenty-one LDCs as a group and from 196 to 259 percent for Latin American countries. This contrasts with the growth in the total-debt-to-exports ratio between 1975 and 1979 from 120 to 133 percent. At the same time a good deal of the increased lending during this period was short term as banks became skeptical about committing funds on a longer-term basis because of risk. Thus, the debt-servicing requirement—the interest to be paid on external debt plus all maturing debt—rose even more dramatically for these countries.

For example, for the LDCs as a group, total debt service (in the way in which we have just defined it) as a percentage of exports rose from 50 percent in 1979 to 75 percent in 1982 (in 1975 the figure was 37 percent). For Latin America the initial figure was much higher in 1979, namely 76 percent, but by 1982 this had reached 125 percent. Over the same period the current account deficit was deteriorating. As a percentage of exports, the current account deficit rose in the twenty-one LDCs between 1979 and 1982 from 12 to 23 percent and in Latin American countries from 21 to 33 percent. It is also interesting to notice from Table 2 the fact that the debt service ratio at the beginning of this year for Latin American countries was three times the size of that of Asian countries.

If a debtor country is unable to meet its schedule of servicing and repayment of external debt, the lender has two major options—either he can put the country in default or else he can arrange a rescheduling of debt. The choice open to the borrower is to agree to rescheduling or else to repudiate his debt. So far recourse to repudiation and default have been avoided by borrowers and lenders. Rescheduling is not something new. From the end of the Second World War to 1981 there were over eighty sovereign debt reschedulings, beginning with Argentina in 1956. The average amounts rescheduled, however, although growing over time largely because of inflation, were not large: Between 1956 and 1969 the figure was $220,000,000; from 1970 to 1976 it was $36,000,000; and from 1977 to 1981 it was $750,000,000. Typical countries involved were Costa Rica, Cuba, Malawi, Pakistan, Nicaragua, Sudan, and Zaire. During the 1970s the two major reschedulings of bank debt were Turkey and Peru with total debts outstanding of roughly $3.5 billion to $4 billion, and as with all of the reschedulings pre-1981, they did not have repercussions for bor-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rowing by neighboring countries. That changed, however, with the Polish rescheduling of 1981, which has affected lending to all Eastern European countries, and the Mexican rescheduling of 1982, which has affected lending to the whole of Latin America. At present the Morgan Guaranty estimate is that around twenty-five countries are in arrears, are in the process of rescheduling, or have rescheduled portions of their debt, and that the total outstanding bank debt of these countries is roughly $200 billion (mainly Latin American), which is about one half of all LDC and East European debt owed to commercial banks.

While risks in international banking have been increasing over the last twenty years, the ability of banks to handle those risks has been declining. Banks' ability to handle risk is measured by the amount of capital they possess (the difference between their total holding of assets and claims to those assets) relative to the risks they face in doing business. A typical, if rough, measure of capital adequacy is the ratio of bank capital to total assets. Although it is not easy to get precise statistics and although cross-country comparisons are difficult, one fact stands out above all others for the last twenty years: namely, that capital adequacy has been declining in the international banking system over the past two decades. For all U.S. commercial banks the ratio of equity to total assets fell from 8.1 percent in 1960 to 6.4 percent in 1972 to 5.2 percent in 1980, while that of money center bank holding companies (the key banks for LDC lending) fell from 9 percent in 1960 through 4.9 percent in 1972 to 3.6 percent in 1980. Over the 1970s the same downward trend can also be seen among the Swiss, Japanese, British, West German, Canadian, and French banks. The cause of this decline has been the inflation of the late 1960s and 1970s and the commercial judgment by banks that they could afford to get along with less capital. It was because of this decline and the fact that the banks have had to cope with a variety of greater risks, apart from the commercial and political risks of large sovereign borrowers, such as widely fluctuating interest rates, that in March 1982 Moody's, one of the major credit rating agencies in the United States, downgraded the long-term status of nine large American banks, including the Bank of America, Chase Manhattan, Mellon National, and Manufacturers Hanover from a triple A rating to a double A rating.

Faring Poorly

The exposure of the nine largest U.S. banks to Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico alone now exceeds their capital; their total exposure to debt of all developing countries and Eastern Europe is some 250 percent of their capital base. For all U.S. banks the ratio of loans to nonoil developing countries plus Eastern Europe to capital stands at 160 percent.

The present banking crisis is a complex business, and it would be wrong to put forward any simple causal explanation. It is best thought of from three perspectives. In the most immediate sense it is the result of an unexpectedly severe global recession following the second oil price hike in 1979–80 coupled with equally unexpectedly high interest rates. In a less immediate sense it can be explained by the banking system's being persuaded to carry out a role in international finance—namely the financing of consumption rather than trade and investment in the world economy—very different from what it has done in the past and for which it may not be particularly either suited or equipped. From the broadest perspective of all, the lack of health in the world's banking system may be the symptom of a rather ailing Western economic and social system.

In a proximate sense the unexpected severity of the world recession and the unexpected persistence of high interest rates can account quite adequately for the present financial problems of the LDCs and hence their inability to service and repay their debt. In the second half of the 1970s the export volume of major LDC borrowers grew at an average annual rate of 8 to 9 percent. In 1982

. . . the ability of banks to constrain the activities of countries is far less than their ability to constrain the activities of companies.

this had slowed down to 1 percent. At the same time export prices for these countries fell by 11 percent in dollars, and their terms of trade (namely the ratio of export prices to import prices) also fell by 11 percent. The dollar value of their exports was the same in 1982 as in 1980. Following the first oil price shock in 1973–74 the LDCs increased their borrowing in order to finance larger balance-of-payments deficits. The result was that in 1974–75 their growth rate was still as high as 5½ percent, industrial countries soon recovered, and the world recession proved to be of very short duration. They continued to do the same in the early eighties. As a result, total external debt as a percentage of exports rose from 123 percent in 1980 to 197 percent in 1982, and the current account deficit as a percentage of exports rose from 12 to 23 percent.

The climate of the eighties, however, has been very different from that of the mid-seventies. As the Thatcher and Reagan administrations have given priority to wringing inflation out of the system, but without at the same time being able to cut their budget deficits to the same extent that they have cut monetary growth, interest rates have risen and remained high in nominal and real terms, with the result that the recession has proved to be far more severe than expected. As a result, total debt service as a percentage of exports for the LDCs rose from 47 percent in 1980 to 75 percent in 1982, and for Latin American countries over the same period from 73 to 125 percent. Rimmer de Vries of Morgan Guaranty ran an interesting simulation experiment. He examined the problems of the leading LDCs on the assumption that there had been no recession between 1980 and 1982 and that growth in OECD countries, instead of averaging 0.6

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

percent over these years, had been nearer their trend rate and averaged 3 percent per annum. The implications of this critical assumption are that interest rates would have been lower, the terms of trade unchanged, and export volume very much higher in 1982. The effect on the developing countries is that their balance of payments deficits would have been more than halved, external debt would have grown much more slowly, and total debt as a percentage of exports would have been the same in 1982 as in 1980. In this kind of world the present banking crisis would never have emerged.

At one level, therefore, the international banking crisis can be explained by a particularly severe and drawn-out recession coupled with high interest rates. If, however, we take a longer-term perspective, say a decade or two, it becomes apparent that the role of the international banking system in the world's financial markets has changed

. . . banks made a fundamental error . . . in "overestimating the capacity of individual sovereign countries to handle their debt burden."

dramatically following the oil price shock of 1973, becoming much more exposed to certain kinds of risk than it was previously. The international financial markets are made up of the Eurocurrency markets, which are markets for bank deposits and bank credits, and the international bond markets, which deal with issued paper. The basic underlying reasons for the growth of these markets over the past two decades have been the growth of the world economy, the advent of the multinational enterprise, and the integration of world capital markets following the restoration of currency convertibility in the late 1950s. Before the first oil price shock of 1973, the international banks, roughly speaking, financed international trade and borrowing by private business corporations, and the bond markets were used by governments and corporations of the industrial countries to finance investment and to some extent balance-of-payments deficits. The LDCs borrowed little from either the Eurocurrency or the bond markets.

Following the oil price rise of 1973 and the creation of an enormous imbalance of payments between OPEC countries and the rest of the world, there was a need for the OPEC surplus to be recycled to deficit countries, and this took place largely through the banking system, not the bond markets. The reasons for this were the preference of the OPEC countries for holding bank deposits rather than bonds, and the fact that the banking system may have been a more efficient channel of intermediation. Whatever the reasons, it produced three major changes in international banking. First, banks became involved in acting as intermediaries between the public sectors of various countries: The OPEC surpluses were deposited by governments and borrowed to a large extent by sovereign governments, nationalized industries, and public institutes. This meant that banks were exposing themselves directly to political risk in a way they had hitherto avoided. If the behavior of their capital asset ratios is anything to judge by, the banks therefore judged this political risk as being less than normal commercial risk. The fundamental assumption was that while companies could go bankrupt, countries could not. It has turned out, however, that the ability of banks to constrain the activities of countries is far less than their ability to constrain the activities of companies.

Second, as a result of the recycling of the OPEC surpluses as well as the attractive growth rates of the LDCs, the LDCs became major borrowers in the international financial markets. By the end of the 1970s the LDCs were responsible for something like 30 percent of borrowing in the markets, and that borrowing was mainly from the banks rather than the bond markets.

Third, as a result of acting as intermediaries between public sector OPEC deposits and LDC governments, the banks found themselves in medium-term balance-of-payments financing rather than temporary trade and financing for private corporations. But general balance-of-payments financing amounts to the financing of consumption rather than specific trade and investment projects. And though the banks have provided balance-of-payments financing in this way, it has been on easier terms than that provided by the International Monetary Fund (for longer periods of time and without the conditionality requirements imposed by the fund), and it has not been nearly as linked to project finance as it might have been if it had been channeled through the World Bank.

It is the combination of these factors, added to the unexpected severity of the recession, that has led Rimmer de Vries of Morgan Guaranty and doyen of international bank economists to argue that the banks made a fundamental error of judgment following the second oil price shock in "overestimating the capacity of individual sovereign countries to handle their debt burden. Some traditional yardsticks applied in assessing creditworthiness were discarded by borrowers and lenders as long as they felt that countries had ready access to international capital markets. Lenders were drawn to an attractive and increasingly competitive market environment, as more and more banks became active participants in international loan syndications. Bank managements and governments—and the international institutions as well—were caught up in pervasive faith in almost inevitable economic growth."

Dominoes

There is one other factor not mentioned by de Vries that must be important. The prevailing but unwritten assumption in the international banking system is that although the world's leading central banks might permit small banks in their respective countries to go into liquidation, they would not allow large banks to go the same route. For example, the U.S. Federal Reserve is unlikely to allow Chase Manhattan or Citibank to go the wall even if the banks have been mismanaged. They might change the management, and they might inject tempo-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rary capital, but they would not allow banks of this size to go out of business. The reason is simply the fear that the domino effect of such a failure would be potentially so great that it would be prohibitive. Never mind for the moment whether this fear is in fact correct. But assume that this is the prevailing judgment among the banking community. It means that leading commercial banks will be perfectly willing to join a syndication for lending purposes, as the most that is at risk for bank management is their job, and if they are linked to each other through syndication, even that becomes a remote possibility. If this analysis of the prevailing view is correct, it means that large banks are not subject to the normal constraints of the marketplace, and that raises a major problem for public policy in this area.

The third and more general explanation for the present crisis is that it is part of the wider economic problems facing the Western world. "You cannot have a healthy financial or banking system in the middle of a sick economy" is a commonly heard expression among bankers. Though this might well have an immediate relevance to the world recession and high interest rates, it also has a more general relevance. It is impossible to shield banking from the wider economy as bank borrowers and depositors are themselves the consumers and corporations who make up the economy. The problem of the U.S. banks in the late twenties and early thirties was related to the problems of the Great Depression and the mismanagement of monetary policy. The "fringe bank" crisis in the United Kingdom in 1974–75 was related to the great inflation and the subsequent collapse brought about by Mr. Heath's irresponsible conduct of monetary and fiscal policy.

Since the late 1960s the Western world has suffered from growing government and a high and volatile inflation that has undermined corporate balance sheets, produced high and volatile interest rates, and indirectly caused the OPEC price hike and the painful monetary and fiscal policies that have been necessary to deal with the problem. In this sense the problems of the banks are symptoms of something much greater.

Present Danger

The crisis has produced an enormous variety of possible solutions ranging from reflation in the Western world to the reform of the IMF and the World Bank, the creation of new international institutions, restructuring of LDC debt from the banks to the capital markets, the creation of an international lender of last resort, the tightening of the supervisory net on banks, and the imposition of a cap on the total indebtedness of each borrowing country. The danger at present is that the real risks the system faces will lead policy makers into temporary solutions and the creation of new institutions that will prove to be long-term liabilities. In my view a sound approach would have four major features.

In the first place, it should require the developed countries to pursue sound medium-term monetary and fiscal policies. Just as the immediate cause of the crisis has been high interest rates coupled with an unexpectedly severe recession in industrial countries, so the solution lies in a strong recovery. High real growth in OECD countries would mean a rapid growth of export volume for LDCs, higher export prices, an improvement in the terms of trade, and a falling debt-export ratio for the developing countries. Such recovery, however, will not result from a traditional fiscal boost to Western economies. Although unexpected increased public sector spending or tax cuts may produce a boost to spending and real output, public sector deficits will also increase—accompanied by an increase in the general level of interest rates. This will have the effect of cutting back expenditure so that in the medium term there will be no net increase in either output or jobs in these countries. The key equipment for medium-term stability is that countries pursue declining targets for monetary growth and for public expenditure and public deficits as a proportion of gross national product. This offers little comfort to the LDCs in the very short term, but it offers the only viable long-run solution.

. . . the mystique has grown up that banks are different from other sorts of companies, that . . . banks cannot fold because of the domino effect.

A second element in a sound solution is that banks that have been mismanaged and have thus judged risks wrongly must be allowed to go into liquidation *regardless of size*. Over the postwar years the mystique has grown up that banks are different from other sorts of companies, that although such companies as Laker and de Lorean can go into liquidation, banks cannot fold because of the domino effect. It is true that in one respect banks are different from other kinds of business. If a bank failure were to lead to a panic run on the banking system as a whole, then an individual bankruptcy could lead to a withdrawal of deposits from the system as a whole, a contraction of the money stock, and a deflation within the financial system that would have a much greater effect than the failure of an individual bank. This is the argument for deposit insurance—depositors are assured of the security of deposits up to a certain amount even in the face of failure. In most countries the monetary or regulatory authorities have introduced some form of deposit insurance. In consequence it seems unlikely, therefore, that such a panic would take place. In addition, if the central bank (unlike the U.S. Federal Reserve between 1929 and 1933) were to provide as much liquidity as the private sector needed during the days following a bank failure and make very clear to the public their intentions not to let a domino effect take place, the probability that a run on the system would develop must be rated very small. If, despite the force of these arguments, the authorities persist in arguing that certain banks are simply too large to be allowed to go into liquidation, this must cast serious doubts on that country's competition policy in the financial sector. No bank

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

should be so large that its size makes it an effective shield against the rigors of the marketplace. The tragedy at present in discussion of solutions to the banking crisis is that very few of the proposals accept that individual banks must face up to the consequences of mismanagement.

Reflation

A third element in resolving the present difficulties is that existing international institutions, such as the IMF and the World Bank, should not be given new resources and functions and that new institutions should not be created. This is possibly the greatest danger of all at present. Ever since the demise of the Bretton Woods international monetary system in 1971–73 and the introduction of floating exchange rates, the IMF has been looking for a new role to play in the international monetary system. The danger at present is that the banking crisis may well provide such a role and that the end result will be not only to let debtor countries off the hook rather lightly but also to shore up inefficiently managed banks and, through the creation of new special drawing rights, give impetus to a resurgence of world inflation. It is very difficult to believe that with the increased resources already voted for the IMF, the outcome will be anything but inflationary. In strict logic this result need not follow—but avoiding this outcome would require countries to reduce their money stocks in line with their increased contributions to the fund.

Just as damaging as a boost to world inflation would be the creation of new institutions whose *raison d'être* was the regulation of the world's banking system. A major factor in both the growth of world trade over the past thirty years and the phenomenon of the newly industrializing countries has been the rapid growth of the Eurocurrency markets and the international bond markets, which have provided truly international money for the world economy and channeled savings to areas of productive investment. One critical reason for the success of these markets has been the absence of regulation (regarding cash, liquid assets, direction of investments, capital, or interest rate levels), which is tantamount to a tax. The general effect of the imposition of a tax on any industry is to reduce its size, and precisely this would happen in the case of the financial markets.

The fourth element in developing a way forward must be to avoid the temptation to undertake any great conversion of bank debt into bonds. The international banks have made substantial profit from lending to the LDCs over the past ten years. The risks from their management decisions over this period are not evident. The demand by bankers for some conversion is simply an attempt to transfer the risks from their shareholders to the taxpayers in their respective countries.

In addition, it is highly doubtful whether in the long run the LDCs themselves would benefit from changing the ratio of bank to bond finance. The banks have acted as very efficient intermediaries since the first oil price shock of 1973, and there is no reason to doubt their ability to continue in this role.

The international banking crisis has proved to be a salutary reminder to the world's banking system that the risks banks take are crucially dependent on the loans they make. It would be a great tragedy if Western governments attempted to devise solutions to the present problems that basically shielded them from this fact. The outlook, however, is not necessarily bleak. Some banks should be allowed to go into liquidation. The sense of reality that this would bring to the banking community would do nothing but good. At the same time, if Western countries pursue sound monetary and fiscal policies, they will be doing the most within their power to lay the foundations for medium-term stability and recovery.

---

1. Less developed countries.
2. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Photo credit: Library of Congress 11419-Z62-662. *Policy Review* added the balloon labeled "Third-World Loans."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bilingual Education

Training for the Ghetto

Robert E. Rossier

Historically, one of the most important ways for immigrant children to achieve economic, social, and political access to the American dream has been through education. Besides offering these students the opportunity to carry their studies to a level not possible in most countries, American public schools have given them what may be the most important opportunity of all—the chance to learn the language of the country. Now this critical avenue to success is being narrowed. The modern immigrant has been betrayed by a confederation of power-seeking politicians, unprincipled educators, and unwitting Americans.

Though no single person or group is totally responsible for this betrayal, much of the culpability can be assigned to the leaders in the bilingual education movement. There are many sincere people involved—parents, teachers, administrators, legislators—who, however noble their intentions, do not understand that bilingual instruction can only retard the learning of English. My criticism is directed at those who know how bilingual programs affect the learning of English and still defend the theory despite its inefficacy in practice.

The myth of bilingual education has been built on ignorance about how immigrants learn a new language. The premise that inspires almost all justification for bilingual programs—that because non-English-speaking students find it difficult at first to understand concepts in the new language, they should receive subject matter instruction in the home language—breaks down upon analysis. Yet this premise is almost universally accepted, by opponents as well as proponents.

The judiciary in particular has been duped by the argument that instruction must be given in the home language so that students do not fall behind in their studies while they learn English. The question of when, where, and how they are to learn English if they are using another language is always left unanswered, if it is ever asked. Judge William Wayne Justice, a federal judge in Texas who has been elevated to the ranks of liberal sainthood because of his several landmark decisions on integration and bilingual education, expressed this credo very simply in a recent decision that ordered bilingual education to be extended to all grades of Texas schools.

> Unless they receive instruction in a language they can understand pending a time they are able to make the transition to all English classrooms, hundreds of thousands of Mexican-American children will remain educationally crippled for life, denied the equal opportunity most Americans take for granted.[1]

Implicit in his statement is the assumption that somehow

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Children of eighteen nationalities at Public School Number 1 in New York City, 1926.

these students would learn English as they received instruction in the home language.

Another star of the federal bench, Judge Paul Egly, who presided over the Los Angeles school desegregation case until he finally resigned in a pique, recently complained about California's "inhuman" treatment of Hispanic students. Egly blamed the state's bilingual education law, which he said had caused this type of education to be "ineffective in Los Angeles because of a lack of qualified [bilingual] teachers."[2] Like his Texas colleague, Egly assumes that immigrant students learn English by means of translations provided by bilingual teachers.

But this sublime credulity about bilingual education has not been restricted to the judiciary; it has captured the liberal mind of the media. The *Los Angeles Times*, for example, published an editorial last year that was a masterpiece of confused and contradictory thinking.[3] Though the *Times* conceded that "children can be taught English by hearing English," it concluded that because they "are often immersed at home and in the street in Spanish only, the bilingual approach often works better." That is, in order for children to learn English, it is better for them to hear less English than to hear more English.

Critics of bilingual instruction have done no better than their liberal opponents in demonstrating their comprehension of the issue. They often equate bilingual education with bilingualism, for example, and from this supposed equivalency stems their contention that bilingual education is bad because it promotes bilingualism, which they believe to be socially divisive. Social division may indeed be a consequence of bilingual instruction, but not because such education contributes to bilingualism—because it does not. Instead, bilingual programs often retard English language learning and thus inhibit the communication that is so necessary to social understanding and harmony.

Bilingualism is not socially undesirable. Rather, it can be of positive value not only to the individual but also to society. If immigrants (a cover term in this article for legal immigrants, illegal aliens, and refugees) learn to function well in English, they will add English to their first language and by definition become bilingual. Unless we believe that the ability to communicate in English creates social division rather than unity, immigrant bilingualism will benefit our society. The key point of dispute, then, has to do with whether students can learn English more efficiently by instruction in two languages or in special English programs.

The allegation that bilingualism is socially divisive is the weakest argument against bilingual education, yet this was the ineffectual stance of California's former

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

superintendent of public instruction, Max Rafferty, who not long ago called it the hoax of the eighties.[4] He avowed that immigrant children should learn English so that the country would not be "balkanized" but then demonstrated his lack of understanding of how they were to learn the language by attacking the phrase "English as a second language," a term used for at least 15 years to signify a variety of education programs and methods that have one thing in common: They teach English by using special instruction in English.

Ironically, critics of bilingual education miss the very point that would invalidate the case for bilingual education—that English cannot be learned through instruction in Spanish, Chinese, or any other language. For several reasons bilingual instruction retards the learning of English. First, the amount of time that the learner has to interact with speakers of the new language is critical; in bilingual programs that time is considerably less than in other language programs. More important, because of the heavy emphasis on translation in bilingual programs, many students become inhibited about responding in English when they know the teacher understands their native language. Only a few highly motivated, gifted students can surmount this obstacle. Most immigrant students in bilingual programs become habituated to responding in their native language and find it difficult to reach the point at which they no longer translate into English but instead think in English.

If the bilingual movement has an Achilles heel, it is its record of being unable to produce significant research and objective evaluations in support of the bilingual method. It would seem that in the ten-plus years these programs have been operating, some conclusive evidence could answer the question, are bilingual programs doing a better job of teaching English than the programs they replaced? But researchers have rarely tried to answer that question. Instead, they have studied and evaluated questions related only remotely to language learning, and they have shown little objectivity in doing so.

Nary a Shred

In 1978 Rudolph Troike, then director of the federally funded Center for Applied Linguistics and a bilingual enthusiast, unintentionally focused on the failure of bilingual proponents to offer empirical justification when he pointed out that the Bilingual Education Act of 1968 (Title VII) was passed by Congress "largely as an article of faith, with little research to support it."[5] In a monograph written for the National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education, he admitted, "We have very little more of a research base for bilingual programs than we did 10 years ago. . . . Unfortunately, although evaluations should be a prime source of data on program results, the vast majority of them are worthless for this purpose."

As an example, Dr. Troike cited a survey done by the Center for Applied Linguistics in developing a master plan for the San Francisco schools. The survey found that only 7 of 150 evaluations met even "minimal criteria for acceptability and contained usable information."[6] Another survey, done by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, resulted in the rejection of all but 3 of 108 evaluations and 12 of 76 research studies. The wonder of all this is that in ten years the federal government alone had, by Dr. Troike's own admission, appropriated more than half a billion dollars (worth close to a billion now) for bilingual education without a shred of evidence that this instruction had helped anyone except the bureaucrats themselves.

In 1975, however, an evaluation was published that would soon be used by partisans as empirical evidence that bilingual education worked. Although Andrew Cohen, a doctoral candidate at Stanford University, was cautious in generalizing about the results of his study of the Redwood City (California) Bilingual Project, he was not reluctant to state, "The preliminary results of this study are highly supportive of bilingual/bicultural schooling," and on the strength of these admittedly preliminary results he recommended that "bilingual programs should be implemented and continued elsewhere."[7]

[It is important to] researchers that bilingual programs grow by constant reinforcement of the myth that such instruction is superior.

Mr. Cohen's "A Sociolinguistic Approach to Bilingual Education" has been one of the studies most frequently cited in support of bilingual education. The study covered the 1970–71 and 1971–72 school years and involved four groups of students, two experimental and two control, in two schools in Redwood City. In all, ninety Mexican-Americans (whom Mr. Cohen fails to distinguish from Mexican students, who comprised approximately a third of the students in the experimental groups and almost half in the control groups) took part in the experiment. The experimental groups received bilingual instruction; the control groups received instruction only in English.

The questions Mr. Cohen asked centered on two comparisons. First, after several years of bilingual instruction, were the children in the experimental groups as proficient in English language skills as the control-group children, who had been taught only in English? Second, were the experimental-group students more proficient in Spanish? Yes, on both counts, he concluded. But his conclusions are questionable if one examines the data carefully.

His data showed that for most measures of English language skills the control groups, not the experimental ones, were superior. For example, although he minimized the differences, the data demonstrated that the control groups were clearly superior in the critically important skill of reading. For other language skills the results were more mixed but still favored the control groups. The really surprising results, though, indicated

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that the students who had no Spanish instruction had done as well as or better than the experimental students in several measures of Spanish language, including reading.

It was not until some years after the Cohen study was published that questions were raised about its value to the cause of bilingual education. Although Rudolph Troike noticed the contradictory results in reading,[8] he still refused to find fault with the bilingual method and instead reported that improper implementation of the method, not the method itself, was responsible for the disappointing results.

Another authority on language teaching, Nicholas Hawkes of the University of York, England, finally penetrated the rhetorical fog that obscured the Redwood City study. In reviewing Mr. Cohen's report of the study in the *International Review of Education* in 1979, Hawkes gently posed a devastating question:

> Later results from grades 3–5 . . . showed that by 1974 the English-only group were still doing remarkably well in Spanish compared with the [bilingual education] children, yet were well ahead of them in English reading. One is therefore prompted to ask: if Spanish-speaking children who are taught no Spanish can compare so favourably in Spanish with bilingually taught children, while drawing ahead of them in English, is the Spanish *medium* element in schooling really essential to the realization of the linguistic aims of [bilingual education]?[9]

Professor Hawkes had to know that without what he calls the Spanish medium element, bilingual education would no longer be bilingual.

The Cohen study typifies most of the research and evaluation of the last decade: The enthusiastic conclusions seldom follow logically from the data, and few people notice. What is important to the researchers is that bilingual programs grow by constant reinforcement of the myth that such instruction is superior to monolingual, English instruction because it helps maintain the home language without retarding English language development. The question of special-emphasis English programs is carefully avoided, thus establishing in the public mind that there is no alternative to bilingual education.

Despite its inadequacies, the Cohen study has had far more political influence than almost any other research work in the field. An example of the impulse it has given to bilingual education in California can be found in a publication of the state's department of education. *Bilingual Program, Policy, and Assessment Issues,* issued in 1981, consists of scholarly papers written partly to counteract two highly publicized reports critical of bilingual education—the federally funded American Institutes for Research (AIR) study of Title VII bilingual programs, and Noel Epstein's monograph on alternatives to bilingual education, which in the late 1970s had shaken public confidence in the bilingual concept. The California report was an attempt to repair the damaged image of the concept and to assert the state's leadership.

Six nationally distinguished educators were commissioned by the state to lead panels of experts, who then formulated recommendations and prepared written reports for the publication. Chosen to write the most important section, that dealing with non- and limited-English-speaking students, were Heidi Dulay and Marina Burt, researchers with a national reputation for their study of second-language acquisition.[10] Their treatment of the topic in the report explored a number of theoretical and practical facets of bilingual education and concluded with a defense of its effectiveness.

Misses Dulay and Burt roundly criticized the AIR report and the Epstein monograph for methodological shortcomings. They produced a list of nine studies and three demonstration projects that met their supposedly rigid standards and broke these sources down into ten categories. The Cohen study appears in seven of the ten. Further scrutiny shows that although the authors considered nine studies acceptable, only six appear in the categorical listings, and of these, two were conducted in the Philippines and Mexico, where linguistic and sociological situations are so different that valid comparisons with U.S. language programs cannot be made. And so the department of education of California, the state with the nation's largest population of immigrant children, champions bilingual education on the basis of foreign studies that are not relevant and studies whose results directly contradict the conclusions of the researcher.

If little valid evidence substantiates the bilingual lobby's claims, then it is logical to ask about the alternatives—programs to help immigrant students learn English rapidly without exhausting the resources of school districts. The most pervasive fiction of the bilingual mythology is that the only alternative to bilingual classes is the "sink or swim" method, in which immigrant students are placed directly in regular classes taught in English and receive little if any special help in learning to speak the new language.

Political Motivations

This country has a long history of educational programs for immigrant students. Los Angeles has had special English programs since 1915, and up to the advent of bilingual education in the 1970s, they enabled many tens of thousands of students who spoke little or no English to be integrated into the schools' regular classes. The programs were organized differently at the primary and secondary levels, and the instructional methodology varied over the years, but the common goal was to provide special English classes away from the regular classroom until the student could function with English-speaking classmates. The best of these programs acknowledged that students have different capacities for learning language and recognized that most of their ability to learn English would come from interaction with English speakers both in and out of school, not from formal language instruction. For this reason most of the old programs were integrative, not segregative, as are bilingual programs.

There is almost no mention in the literature of such programs, probably because before the bilingual revolu-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion the education of immigrant students was not seen as having political potential. Now it appears that bilingual partisans will attempt to suppress any efforts to compare alternatives with the bilingual method. A case in point: The Los Angeles school district, which claims almost 100,000 students in bilingual programs, has not only failed to publish any study that would give objective evidence of those programs' effectiveness but also appears to have detoured, hidden, and actually aborted studies that would compare other methods with bilingual instruction.

One study that apparently was aborted was an evaluation of the Title VII Bilingual Schools Project for the 1977–78 school year. The experimental group for the study consisted of students in bilingual programs, and the control group was made up of students who received instruction in English as a second language. Both groups were tested in English language skills, and the data were sent to a private research firm, which had a $29,000 contract to evaluate them. After the testing, however, official mention of the study ceases. No formal report of the results, either written or oral, was ever presented to the Los Angeles board of education, which funded the study.

Buried Evidence

The significance of this study—and of its disappearance—should not be overlooked. Almost all other studies of bilingual education have used control groups of students in regular classes, in a sink-or-swim situation, without special help in learning English. This study would have compared students receiving bilingual instruction with those placed in special classes designed to help them learn to speak, read, and write English.

In the same school year a speech therapist in the Los Angeles school district received approval from the board of education to compare primary-school students who spoke mostly Spanish and received bilingual instruction with those receiving special English-only instruction. But the study never got off the ground because, as the speech therapist told me, district officials said it would duplicate a study of wider scope planned at the state level. To date, however, the state department of education has not published any studies even remotely similar to that aborted Los Angeles study.

At least three other studies on immigrant English learning in the Los Angeles schools have been buried in district archives over a number of years. The earliest was a statistical analysis of 150 high school seniors (most of them from Spanish-speaking countries) who had come to the United States in the junior high or senior high school years, studied English in a special program and then graduated. Despite their relatively short residence in the United States (three to six years), these students compared favorably with their English-speaking classmates in class rank, grade-point average, occupational choice, and post-secondary educational plans. The students' performance in the regular educational program was especially notable, with more than 61 percent achieving a 2.0 (C) average or better in high school.

In 1975 Richard Shea investigated student and parental attitudes toward English and Spanish, including their relative preference for English-only instruction, bilingual instruction, and Spanish-only instruction.[11] The study, undertaken in a San Fernando Valley junior high school with mostly Spanish-surnamed students, found that depending on the subject to be taught, 66.8 to 82.9 percent of the 960 student respondents and 58 to 71.8 percent of the 254 parents preferred English-only instruction.

The third buried study dealt with personality variables in learning English as a second language.[12] Data indicated the importance to the learner of in-school exposure to English in addition to structured English lessons.

Results of those studies have never surfaced in the Los Angeles board of education's reports. Objective evaluation of bilingual education programs in Los Angeles, then, has been carefully avoided, and there has been a pattern of suppression of district, state, and independent research having potential for showing that alternative programs would be superior to bilingual programs. Is what has happened in Los Angeles typical? Remember that Dr. Troike's 1978 survey of evaluations nationwide described most as "worthless." During the early years of bilingual education comparisons of bilingual programs with other methods could easily have been carried out; today it would be difficult, since politicians in many states have given bilingual programs a monopoly, prohibiting other special language programs by law or through federal or state funding regulations.

Why has there been such reluctance to evaluate bilingual programs objectively? Why aren't bilingual evaluations conducted by individuals or organizations with no vested interest in the perpetuation of these programs?

The most intriguing question will probably not be answered because of the powerful political pressures associated with the bilingual education movement: Does bilingual education provide equal educational opportunity to students who speak languages other than English, as required by *Lau v. Nichols*? That landmark Supreme Court decision has been interpreted as a mandate for bilingual education. The plaintiffs, certain Chinese students in the San Francisco schools, sued the school district because instead of being given special English instruction, as were some other Chinese students, they were placed in the regular program with English-speaking students. The Court decided that the plaintiffs were being deprived of equal educational opportunity in accordance with the 1964 Civil Rights Act. No particular type of instruction was sought by the plaintiffs, nor was any specified by the Court, although both bilingual classes and special all-English instruction were mentioned as possibilities.

Hoodwinked

Thus *Lau v. Nichols* did not mandate bilingual education; it permits any special instruction that would provide equal educational opportunity. The Court found that the instruction must be special in that it would enable the students to learn English outside the regular classroom, where they were at a disadvantage. When they had achieved sufficient proficiency in English, they would enter the regular program to enjoy the same op-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

portunities available to native English-speaking students.

It follows that the test of any special language program should be its efficiency in teaching English. The lack of evidence that bilingual education has any positive effect in promoting English language learning leads to the inescapable conclusion that this method does not meet the Lau test.

Why, then, has this type of instruction been so vigorously promoted and so little criticized? The answer is that the bilingual education movement has been a political rather than an educational movement.

The leading spokesmen of the movement understood that the establishment of bilingual programs had enormous political and financial potential. They got away with it because language learning offered the perfect shield from criticism: Americans have been spectacularly unsuccessful at learning second languages, and because of their relative lack of linguistic and cultural sophistication, they have been quick to accept the claims of the bilingual activists. Even if they did not entirely accept them, Americans have been reluctant to criticize for fear of displaying ignorance. And so most of the movement's propaganda has gone unchallenged. Unfortunately, those who have spoken out lack the professional experience or practical background to argue effectively against bilingual education. Furthermore, those affected by bilingual education, the immigrant students and their parents, have not really been given a chance to express their opinion. It is worth noting, however, that in school districts with adult education programs, immigrant parents attend English classes taught in English in great numbers.

This Office of War Information photograph carries the following caption: "Ojo Sorco, New Mexico, Jan. 1943. One room school in an isolated mountainous Spanish-American community, which has eight grades and two teachers. Most of the teaching is in Spanish, the language spoken in the children's homes, and as a result they rarely speak English fluently."

Taking advantage of the absence of effective opposition, bilingual activists pushed through Congress the Bilingual Education Act of 1968 and much enabling state legislation that paved the way to funding, jobs, and influence. The predominantly political character of the movement has not gone unnoticed in recent years, even by some liberals earlier taken in by the visionary talk. In a recent article in *New Republic,* Abigail Thernstrom observed that "from the very start bilingual education was a bad cause for liberals" because it diminished the educational and economic opportunities of disadvantaged, mostly Hispanic children, and it did so "in programs that segregate the children from their black and white peers."[13] This charge is not new; Noel Epstein criticized the segregative character of bilingual programs some years ago in a monograph that drew outraged howls of protest from bilingual activists.[14]

If the programs segregate and reduce educational and economic opportunity, why are they still defended? In her article Abigail Thernstrom laid the body on the doorstep: "The programs provide both employment and political opportunities, as schools are forced to hire Hispanics without regular teaching credentials, and as students are molded into an ethnically conscious constituency."

Her indictment is understated. Many of those involved with bilingual education—teachers, aides, administrators, school board members, legislators, researchers, textbook authors, publishers—have benefited directly from the establishment of bilingual programs in the public schools.

If the reward was not in new teaching jobs, it came in promotions to administrative and supervisory positions and to new slots for consultants and specialists. Many bilingual programs now represent a district within a district and rival the regular program in size.

Bilingual education has been good business for many people outside the schools as well. There has been a veritable revolution in industries that supply educational products. Texts have been translated and rewritten in bilingual form. Signs, posters, films, tapes, records, and other materials have been reworked. Experts have written new books and set up consulting firms that solicit business from every level of government. The universities, too, have profited: Some states require teachers to take cultural and methodological courses and pass proficiency exams in Spanish or other languages.

The ethnic politician in many cases does not care whether bilingual instruction is a valid method of teaching English. In fact, it may be politically advantageous for him if immigrants continue to rely on their native language instead of perfecting their English, since dependence on the home language tends to isolate the group and make it more manipulable. Immigrants who learn English move closer culturally to the general society and even become assimilated, making political control difficult. Thus, the more militant activists in the movement insist that top priority in bilingual education be given to maintenance of the home language, and they therefore

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

relegate the learning of English to a secondary goal.

Many individuals and groups who actively support bilingual education do not pass the test of objectivity. Two questions should be asked of bilingual education advocates. Will they personally benefit from their advocacy? Can they produce substantial objective evidence that bilingual instruction is superior to other special programs for teaching English? There is nothing wrong with advocating an instruction method even if one benefits personally from it provided its superiority can be shown. But bilingual enthusiasts have been unable to demonstrate that, and yet they clamor for the expansion of bilingual education.

The Lau decision did not specify any particular method as a remedy for students' language deficiency. It was the Department of Health, Education and Welfare that perverted the sense of the Court's decision and created a bilingual monopoly with what are known as the Lau remedies, which essentially mandated bilingual education by creating a yardstick for the government to measure compliance. If districts did not comply, they lost federal funds.

The enforcement arm of the Department of Education, the Office of Civil Rights, has helped the activists create a monopoly for bilingual education across the country. A 1980 *Los Angeles Times* series explained how OCR forced bilingual programs on school districts:

> . . . a task force assembled by the Office for Civil Rights and including mainly advocates of bilingual-bicultural education produced a set of guidelines called the "Lau remedies," which emphasized the bilingual approach.
>
> They required school districts found to be in violation of Lau, and having 20 or more elementary school children from a non-English language group, to provide bilingual-bicultural education for these children in the native language or languages.
>
> The "Lau remedies" . . . became the basis for the Office of Civil Rights' review of more than 300 school districts, enrolling more than 1 million national-origin minority children. The "remedies" have had a curious history. They were not law, or even official federal regulations, never having been published in the Federal Register. Yet they became the basis for extensive negotiations between the Office for Civil Rights and local school districts.[15]

So OCR stacked the deck of the task force that created the Lau remedies, and bilingual activist politicians were able to rig the process of developing remedies that favored their cause.

Furthermore, even though the Lau remedies had no standing in law, they were used to compel school districts to establish bilingual programs where none existed and to expand those already set up. Again, the Los Angeles school district serves as an example. Agitation for bilingual education there dates to the early sixties. In 1969, the first year of federal funding of bilingual programs under the Bilingual Education Act, a controversy arose over the funding of a successful intensive reading program at the Malabar Street School. Critics of the program, including high officials of the federal office of education, cut off funds because it taught English as a second language—not a bilingual approach. Despite intervention by HEW Secretary Robert Finch, who temporarily saved the program by providing funds, it was ultimately eliminated through political action at the district level by bilingual activists who would not tolerate any alternative program.

Meanwhile, bilingual programs were being established in Los Angeles elementary schools. With no opposition, the programs grew rapidly, and by March 1977 the district counted 23,000 students in its programs. Not enough, said Chicano activists mobilized by the intensely political Mexican-American Education Commission. The commission, a quasi-official advisory arm of the Los Angeles board of education, had come into existence after the student walkouts of 1968 and related militant, sometimes violent actions, which had forced the school board to accede to militants' demands for an ethnic oversight group. One of the prime objectives of the commission, according to a *Los Angeles Times* article,[16] was the hiring of more Mexican-Americans, who commission spokesmen insisted were needed to staff a vastly expanded bilingual program.

[Most] project directors indicated that students remained in bilingual programs after they were able to function in regular classes.

Leverage for expansion came from OCR, which said the district was in violation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 because it had "failed to provide what is, in effect, bilingual instruction to limited- and non-English-speaking students" (LES and NES). The 23,000 students already in bilingual programs were not enough; OCR notified the superintendent of schools that the district was not in compliance because fewer than 50 percent of the LES and NES students were receiving "special language assistance as required by law."

Ironically, OCR's charge of noncompliance was probably caused by the bumbling efforts of Los Angeles school officials to play the numbers game. In their eagerness to demonstrate the need to expand bilingual programs, officials had claimed larger and larger numbers of LES and NES students. Even before the district set up a language survey and testing program in 1978, officials had reported that there were 100,000 affected students in the district. In the fall of 1977 a district publication, the *Spotlight,* gave a figure of 120,000 (more than one of every five students) and reported that the number was increasing by about 20,000 a year.[17] By the next year another area newspaper stated that district sources put the number at 142,000.[18]

A challenge to the wildly escalating counts eventually came from a Los Angeles teachers' organization, the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Professional Educators of Los Angeles. PELA Vice President Betty Cordoba in August 1978 asked the board of education to address her skepticism about the numbers.

Skepticism would occur to anyone who looked up the number of language-deficient students a decade earlier. In 1968–69 the number of students in special language classes in all grades was 12,890. Though students were not then identified as LES or NES, the figures indicate how many students needed special instruction to help them learn English. Attendance in such classes had grown steadily but not spectacularly throughout the sixties.

Five years later, in 1973–74, the number of students identified as LES or NES was 56,036, more than four times the 1968–69 figure. The next year there was a modest increase, to 58,041, but in 1975–76 the number jumped almost 50 percent, to 83,822. In 1976–77 the board was told of another huge increase, to 100,000 students.[19] Thus in two years' time the number of LES and NES students almost doubled. The board members, lacking experience and knowledge in the field, accepted the figures virtually without question and without spotting one obvious problem: How could the counts be accurate if there was no valid method of identifying affected students? It was not until the 1977–78 school year that a testing program was set up to measure students' English proficiency.

Since empire building requires numbers, the identification and assessment procedures used in bilingual education are critical.

Perhaps board members attributed the huge increases to the large influx of immigrants and refugees. Then one would expect higher numbers of non-English-speaking youngsters. But the three-year increase in NES students was from 22,000 to only 29,000, about a 30 percent rise. The LES increase, however, was an astounding 108 percent, from 34,000 to 71,000. These LES figures follow a curious path. From 1973–74 to 1974–75 the increase was only 400 students; in the next year the count shot up by almost 25,000 students; then, in the next year, 16,000 more.

None of Mrs. Cordoba's questions were answered at the time. Instead, an associate superintendent later responded in a letter that he knew would not be placed in the public record.

At best, certain district officials were confused about how many students required help in learning English. At worst, they deceptively claimed enormous growth in the number of these students, thus promoting expansion of the district's bilingual education program.

Though it is relatively easy to identify NES students—they speak little or no English—the determination of LES students is completely arbitrary, especially at the line between limited and fluent English speakers, between those who still need help and those who will benefit more in a regular classroom. One of the most frequent criticisms of bilingual education is that students are kept in bilingual programs long after they should have been placed in regular classes. The federally funded American Institutes of Research study, conducted in the 1975–76 school year in 117 schools across the United States, confirmed this criticism, finding that "less than one third of the students enrolled in the Title VII classrooms in grades two through six were of limited English-speaking ability."[20] In interviews 85 percent of the project directors indicated that students remained in bilingual programs after they were able to function in regular classes; only 5 percent said they transferred their students to English-only classrooms once they had learned English well enough.

That is but one of two practices that make bilingual education a growth industry. The second is to identify new students as LES even though they can function adequately in regular classes. Both practices require only that the LES designation be broad so that more immigrant students are drawn into the bilingual net and then kept there longer. Since empire building requires numbers, the identification and assessment procedures used in bilingual education are critical.

The proficiency test, or assessment instrument, as it is called in education jargon, must not be too narrow in its determination lest some fish slip through the net. In the 1977–78 school year, the first year of state-mandated assessment of English proficiency, the Los Angeles school district apparently chose an assessment instrument that did not produce the desired number of LES students. Those figures, which came from a proficiency testing program, were junked for figures of the preceding year, when the determination of LES students was left to local school personnel, experienced and inexperienced, with whatever method was at hand and without any district-wide or objective definition of the term. That 1976–77 count was used not because it was more valid but because it was some 12,000 students greater and thus closer to the district's earlier claims of 100,000 to 142,000 LES and NES students.

Invalid and Unreliable

The next year officials decided not to use the disappointing proficiency test, the San Diego Observation Assessment Instrument, and chose another that they said had higher validity and reliability ratings—the Bilingual Inventory of Natural Language (BINL). The differences between them are not great. Both are pictorial elicitation tests, that is, tests in which pictures are shown and students are asked to describe what they see. Both have low validity ratings, despite the district's claims. Indeed, schools experienced difficulties with BINL from the start. Stories circulated that some native U.S. students were identified as LES and even NES. In one junior high school, for example, a native-born student who had attended regular classes in the Los Angeles schools since kindergarten and had a B average in regular classes was labeled NES; another NES pupil was foreign-born but

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

had attended school here since the first grade and had a C average in regular classes; two others had lived in the United States only three and four years each but were straight-A students in regular classes.[21]

There were other indications that the validity and reliability of BINL were suspect. In February 1979 a committee of secondary school administrators and bilingual specialists who had met to discuss progress in implementing the district's Lau remedies wrote in their meeting record: "The question remains of validity and reliability of the BINL."[22] But the committee members did not feel any urgency in making a change. BINL is still used in Los Angeles as the principal instrument for determining English proficiency, and there have been no appreciable changes in its procedures.

Even more damaging to the validity of BINL was a report published by the Northwest Regional Education Laboratory, which rated BINL near the bottom in a ranking of fourteen oral tests.[23] The evaluation used a three-point scale (good, fair, poor) to rate four criteria: measurement validity, examinee appropriateness, technical excellence, and administrative usability. On only one measure, examinee appropriateness, did BINL receive even a fair rating. On the others, including validity, it received poor ratings.

If BINL is such a poor instrument, why was it selected? Why is it still being used in Los Angeles? Perhaps the test was chosen because it produced a large number of LES students to support demands for expanded bilingual education programs.

Fat Cats and Lucre

The motivating force for bilingual education, then, has been to provide opportunity not for students to learn but for bilingual educators and others to build empires that offer lucrative and satisfying power bases. In Los Angeles the transition from special English programs to bilingual education programs produced explosive growth in jobs and budgets at the supervisory and administrative levels.

During the middle sixties the district had two language consultants, paid on the teacher salary schedule, one at the elementary and one at the secondary level. By the 1976–77 school year Los Angeles was paying a director of bilingual services $37,739, two assistant directors $32,899 each, and eleven advisers $20,899 each—a salary slightly higher than that of the district's highest-paid teacher. Another $288,362 was budgeted for bilingual support, and $204,968 met costs to administer a bilingual program funded by the state. In all, more than $1,200,000 of the district's total bilingual funds of $15,000,000 was budgeted for administrative costs.

That was five years ago. The position of director has since been elevated to that of assistant superintendent; the salary has been elevated, too, to $50,000. Salaries for administrative and supervisory posts below this level have also increased substantially.

Although the bilingual movement has consistently ridiculed and even suppressed studies of other methods of teaching English to immigrant children, there now exists a large-scale, thorough review of the literature on the effectiveness of bilingual education.[24] Written by two staff members in the U.S. Department of Education, Keith Baker and Adriana de Kanter, it supports key ideas expressed in this paper, especially the belief that school districts should be free to establish alternatives to bilingual education.

The review is limited to two central questions, whether transitional bilingual education leads to better performance in English, and whether it leads to better performance in nonlanguage subjects. It examines more than 300 documents relating to bilingual education and rejects the majority of the studies and evaluations as not methodologically applicable to their two questions. The conclusion, based on twenty-eight studies that met the authors' requirements, is that bilingual education has not proven its case: "These findings do not add up to a very impressive case for the effectiveness of transitional bilingual education." Further, Mr. Baker and Ms. de Kanter found ". . . no firm empirical evidence that [transitional bilingual education] is uniquely effective in raising language-minority students' performance in English or in non-language subject areas."

. . . effective teachers of immigrant students do not *have to be bilinguals. What is important is that they . . . are good models of English.*

The most significant conclusion of the review follows logically: There is a need to try other methods. The authors recommend that each school district be given the freedom to decide what kind of special program would be "most appropriate for its own unique setting" because the prescription of a single, federal remedy is not realistic when so little is known about teaching English to children. In March 1982 the Department of Education withdrew the guidelines that had imposed bilingual education on more than 500 school districts in the nation. Schools are now permitted to use "any effective approach including total immersion in English," another recommendation made in the Baker–de Kanter review. This policy change applies only to the federal level, however, and does not affect California and other states that have more stringent bilingual education laws.

Open the Door

Future immigrant education programs should recognize the unique linguistic, social, and educational situation in each school district but should also be built solidly on three principles of language learning.

- English can be mastered only through linguistic interaction in English, not through translation. Although all proficient bilinguals find themselves occasionally translating unfamiliar words or phrases, oral comprehension and speech are seriously impaired if the learner must translate. Accordingly, effective teachers of immigrant students do *not* have to be bilinguals. What is

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

important is that they understand how language is learned and are good models of English. In fact, bilingual teachers must be disciplined in their use of translation so that their students do not become habituated to translating from one language to another.

○ Though almost all immigrant students can profit from initial language instruction, such help provides only a small fraction of what they need to reach proficiency. For the most part, language teaching provides the learner with information, some of it invaluable, *about* the language. That is not the same as speaking and understanding the language. It is imperative that from the beginning immigrant students not be segregated from their English-speaking classmates for the total school day. The total staff—administrators as well as teachers—must use every opportunity to integrate these English language learners into activities with English-speaking students. Even beginners can join certain classes in which English does not play a large part in the instruction: physical education, art, music, elementary industrial arts, home economics.

○ Some students learn more rapidly and efficiently than others. Language learning is an individual matter, not a group effort. Students in special language programs should therefore be integrated into regular classes on an individual rather than a group basis.

The United States has received great benefit over the years from its immigrants. We should not now close the door to opportunity on young people from other countries who enter our schools seeking to learn the language that binds us all in our common pursuit of social and economic well-being. Bilingual education has been given more than an adequate chance to prove itself, and it has failed miserably. It is now time that other methods be tried—methods that put the welfare of the student ahead of that of the adults who run the programs.

References

1. "Federal Judge Possibly the Most Hated Man in Texas," *Los Angeles Times,* Apr. 12, 1981, Part V, p. 2.
2. "Desegregation Efforts Called Symbolic," *Los Angeles Times,* Mar. 2, 1981, Part I, p. 2.
3. "Language: Politics and Survival," *Los Angeles Times,* Feb. 5, 1981, Part II, p. 6.
4. Max Rafferty, "Bilingual Education: Hoax of the '80s," *American Legion Magazine,* Mar. 1981, p. 15.
5. Rudolph C. Troike, *Research Evidence for the Effectiveness of Bilingual Education* (Rosslyn, Va.: National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education, 1978), p. 1.
6. Ibid., p. 3.
7. Andrew Cohen, *A Sociolinguistic Approach to Bilingual Education,* (Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House Publishers, 1975), p. 265.
8. Troike, *op. cit.,* pp. 11–12.
9. Nicholas Hawkes, review of Andrew Cohen, *A Sociolinguistic Approach to Bilingual Education* in *International Review of Education XXIV* (1978), pp. 424–426.
10. Heidi Dulay and Marina Burt, "Aspects of Bilingual Education for LES/NES Students" in *Bilingual Program, Policy, and Assessment Issues,* pp. 8–38.
11. Richard Shea, "San Fernando Junior High School Needs Assessment Survey," unpub. report (Los Angeles, 1975).
12. Robert Rossier, "Extraversion-Introversion as a Significant Variable in the Learning of English as a Second Language," unpub. dissertation (University of Southern California, 1975).
13. Abigail Thernstrom, "Bilingual Mis-education" in *The New Republic,* Apr. 18, 1981, p. 16.
14. Noel Epstein, *Language, Ethnicity, and the Schools: Policy Alternatives for Bilingual-Bicultural Education,* The George Washington University Institute for Educational Leadership (Washington, D.C., 1977).
15. "Can Bilingual Education Do Its Job?" *Los Angeles Times,* Sept. 4, 1980, Part I, p. 2.
16. "Intervention by Nixon Aids L. A. School Project," *Los Angeles Times,* July 6, 1969, Part B, p. 3.
17. "Bilingual-ESL: Program Boosted by More Funding," *Spotlight,* Nov. 4, 1977, p. 1.
18. "Hispanics in L. A. City Schools: Bilingual Proficiency Targeted," *Valley News,* June 24, 1978, p. 1.
19. "Comparison of Non and Limited English Speaking Pupils Identified," from a report prepared by Bilingual-ESL Services Branch of the LAUSD entitled "Services for Non and Limited English Speaking Pupils," May 26, 1977, Table A.
20. "Interim Results: Evaluation of the Impact of ESEA Title VII Spanish/English Bilingual Program," United States Office of Education/Office of Planning, Budgeting and Evaluation, Apr. 1977, pp. 2–5.
21. Information from the author, who as Lau coordinator in the school at the time had access to the data.
22. "Summary of Meeting Regarding Implementation of Lau Plan in Secondary Schools," Junior High Principals Organization–Educational Development Committee, LAUSD, Feb. 23, 1979.
23. *Oral Language Tests for Bilingual Students: An Evaluation of Language Dominance and Proficiency Instruments* (Portland: Northwest Regional Education Lab, 1976), pp. 124–125.
24. Keith A. Baker and Adriana A. de Kanter, *Effectiveness of Bilingual Education: A Review of the Literature,* report of the Office of Planning, Budget, and Evaluation, Department of Education (Washington, D.C., 1981).

Credits for photos in order of appearance: INP (UPI) 321814; Library of Congress H37565.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Invisible Taxation

The Growth of Italy's Leviathan

Antonio Martino

As long ago as 1892 Vilfredo Pareto noticed that Italy is acted on "by two predominant causes, Protection on the one hand and excessive State expenditures on the other." Italy's financial problems, he continued, "give us an idea of the state to which . . . other countries will come one day, if they do not stop in time on the dangerous course on which they have ventured."[1]

A country that has such a long history of statist exploitation of its citizens should provide a good case study for other nations that are pursuing similar policies. Indeed, our conclusion may be that statism, though so far triumphant in the policies of most Western democracies, might well be not only intellectually defunct but also (and more important) financially bankrupt. Statism has a past, albeit inglorious, but it has no future. It might be that despite the well-meaning but unsuccessful policies of "conservative" leaders, economic freedom will eventually prevail.

For the government, the deficit is the ideal tax for a variety of reasons. First of all, very few people even perceive it as a tax.

It is generally believed that Italians, being ingenious tax evaders, do not pay taxes, or that they pay much less than citizens in other countries. For example, as soon as every new government takes office (Italy has at least one change of government every year), it proclaims that it will solve any and every problem by resorting to a fight against tax evasion. The amount of taxes Italians evade thus becomes some kind of El Dorado, whose fabulous riches, if tapped, would provide benevolent politicians with a panacea for all economic ills of the country. Nor is this notion accepted only by official demagoguery; at times even academics entertain it. Thus, for example, Professor Richard Rose recently stated: "Historically, Italy has been the leader in nonpayment of taxes and there is little doubt that it still is at the head of the pack. One unpublished [Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development] report estimates that tax evasion there is as high as 27 percent of total reported income."[2]

Such a notion, which, as we shall see, is largely unfounded, is probably due to the misleading nature of the term taxes. The best example of the deceptiveness of that ghastly word is provided by the assertion of that Italian economist who publicly declared that there is no connection between taxation and freedom—as evidenced by the fact that the subjects of communist regimes pay little or no taxes (sic) and yet have no political freedom.

The idea that Italians are successful tax evaders is further strengthened by the belief that only people on fixed incomes pay their due. In fact, as has been repeatedly pointed out,[3] people on fixed incomes receive 70 percent of national income but contribute only 40 to 50 percent of the revenue from income taxes.

The truth is that visible taxes are only a fraction of the total cost of government. That is, even if one limits oneself to that part of the total cost of government consisting of pecuniary outlays, visible taxes are only a part of the story. As Professor Milton Friedman puts it: "The true cost of government to the public is not measured by explicit taxes but by government spending. If government spends $500 billion, and takes in through taxes $440 billion . . . who pays the difference? Not Santa Claus, but the U.S. citizen. . . . In effect, what you have are two kinds of taxes: the open, explicit taxes and the hidden taxes. And what's called a deficit is a hidden tax. . . . The thing we must keep our eye on is what government spends. That's the measure of the amount of resources of the nation that people cannot individually and separately decide about. It's a measure of the amount we turn over to the bureaucrats to spend on our behalf."[4]

If this is the case, then in order to have a correct measure of the cost of government—at least of that part that takes the form of pecuniary outlays—one cannot limit oneself to *explicit* taxes. For if this were so, it would be true that taxation in communist countries is low; instead one must look at government spending. Here, it becomes obvious that Italians, despite their ingenuity as tax evaders, do pay very dearly for their government—certainly no less than other nationals and much more than U.S. citizens.

TABLE 1

Public Sector Spending
As a Percentage of Gross Domestic Product

1960–1964	33.9%	1975–1979	48.0%
1965–1969	36.9	1980	50.3
1970–1974	40.0	1981	52.1

Source: A. Martino & E. Del Colle, "<Government push> e inflazione" (unpublished).

Table 1 illustrates the pecuniary cost of government to the Italian taxpayer and its growth since 1960. Accord-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing to one estimate, public sector spending absorbed 26.9 percent of national income in 1951[5]; by 1981 it had almost doubled to 52.1 percent. In thirty years we have gone from a situation in which government was absorbing slightly more than one fourth of national income to one in which it absorbs more than one half. This makes the cost of the Italian government some 40 percent higher—in relative terms—than that of the U.S. government (at all levels).[6] Thus, when we take inflation into account, the per capita cost of government almost doubled from 1960 to 1970 (an increase of more than 92 percent) and almost doubled again from 1970 to 1981 (an increase of more than 93 percent).

In light of these figures, one might well ask how a nation of ingenious tax evaders has ended up sacrificing such a high percentage of its income to the tax man and allowed that percentage to grow so rapidly. To answer this, we must look at the factors that have allowed government to grow so rapidly to such enormous size with very little (if any) open resistance by the taxpayer. One explanation runs as follows:

> In order for taxpayers to oppose government growth, they must be aware of the share of the cost of government that falls on them. People, that is, must realize that *they* are paying for government spending; they must be aware of how much they are paying in taxes. In order for that to happen, taxes must be *visible*. . . . While this is true of some kinds of taxes, it is not true for all. Obviously, from the point of view of the government and of the politicians the preferred type of tax is that which people pay without realizing it, for that avoids the possibility of tax resistance and leaves people unaware of the cost of government. In Italy, most taxes are of this kind.[7]

Indeed, Italians bear the cost of government without being aware that they are paying for it. This is true of *explicit* taxes that are largely *invisible*. According to official figures, for example, income taxes in 1981 amounted to 14.2 percent of net national income. These are the most visible of all taxes, and they were low relative to national income. But even that percentage is misleading, since most people pay their income tax through withholding and are not, therefore, always aware of how much they are paying—everybody tends to think of his income in terms of the net figure. Indirect taxes amounted to 11.9 percent of net national income in 1981. These are almost perfectly invisible, as they are usually included in the prices paid by consumers. Finally, in 1981 social security contributions amounted to 16 percent of net national income; these too are highly invisible, as they are partly paid by the employer. Thus the employee is not aware of how much he is paying through his employer. Of a total explicit fiscal pressure equal to 42.1 percent of net national income, therefore, it is not unreasonable to assume that less than one fourth of it was visible, that is, paid by people fully aware that they were paying taxes.[8]

Explicit taxes are not, unfortunately, the end of the story. The other important component of the pecuniary cost of government is the deficit. Now, if our hypothesis is correct, we would expect that the growth of government has been accompanied (and made possible) by an increase in the deficit—the most invisible of all taxes. This is exactly what has happened.

TABLE 2

Government Deficits as a Percentage of:

	Government Spending	Gross Domestic Product
1960–1964	5.7%	2.1%
1965–1969	9.7	3.8
1970–1974	18.4	7.5
1975–1979	25.3	12.2
1980	21.9	11.0
1981	25.7	13.4

As Table 2 clearly shows, the government deficit has been growing rapidly since 1960, both as a percentage of total public sector spending and as a percentage of national income. In 1960, for every million lire of public spending, 950,000 lire came from explicit taxes of one kind or another; in 1981, for every million lire of public spending, only 743,000 lire were paid for by explicit taxes—the rest was "financed" by the deficit. As a percentage of GDP, the deficit increased more than threefold from 1960 to 1970; and it again increased almost two and a half times from 1970 to 1981. Furthermore, all declines in the absolute size of the deficit (in 1961, 1967, 1969, 1976, and 1979) were invariably followed by sharp increases that more than offset the decline and confirmed the rapidly growing trend. This makes one suspect that those five declines (out of twenty-two years) were the result of accounting gimmickry similar to the kind that has made New York City famous. In nominal terms the deficit was 140 times higher in 1981 than in 1960.

For the government, the deficit is the ideal tax for a variety of reasons. First of all, very few people even perceive it as a tax. Most people are under the delusion that deficit-financed public spending, like manna from heaven, means a benefit no one has to pay for, the proverbial free lunch. Second, no one can predict on an *a priori* basis who is going to bear the burden of the increased deficit. The final outcome depends on a variety of circumstances, including the way the deficit is financed, so that it is impossible to know ahead of time who is going to be hurt. And it is equally difficult to know *a posteriori* whether the deficit tax was paid in the form of inflation or in the form of the destruction of jobs produced by the crowding out of private productive investment. Finally, the cost of the deficit-financed increase in government spending is spread out among a large number of unaware taxpayers. Thus, it is absolutely impossible for them to trace the unpleasant consequences of inflation and slow growth to the deficit and see it as a tax.

It is obvious, however, that the growth of the government deficit cannot continue endlessly. It can very well be

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

argued that a country whose deficit amounts to more than 15 percent of national income—as, according to provisional figures, Italy's did in 1982—has reached the upper limit.

The invisibility of taxes, of which the growth of the unlegislated deficit "tax" is the most conspicuous example, goes a long way in explaining how a country of ingenious tax evaders can end up sacrificing more than half of its income to the greed of politicians and bureaucrats. It is not, however, the whole story. After all, the growth in the cost of government has continued for a long time. People have had ample time to realize what the government was doing to them. Why haven't they rebelled?

Other factors, in addition to invisible taxes, have contributed to the Italian taxpayer's acceptance of an increased degree of statist exploitation. Paradoxically, one reason has been tax evasion. People who are lucky enough to be able to pay less for their government than they are required to do by tax laws are usually aware of it. They derive no little satisfaction from having succeeded in saving some money from the public waste for the benefit of their families and themselves. Such satisfaction might, in some cases, obscure the obvious truth that despite their success in evading, they are still paying more than before. In other words, they are aware of what they are *not* paying, but because of the invisibility of taxes, they are not aware of what they *are* in fact paying. Convinced as they are that they can personally "get away with it," they are often supporters of government growth—and of drastic punishment for tax evasion. It is also for this reason that my socialist friends, who during the course of the year vociferously support any and every increase in government spending, complain bitterly about taxation when the time comes to pay their income tax. They do not see the connection between spending and taxes, or they believe that the others should bear the cost of their favored statist policies. Therefore, when the day of reckoning comes, they condemn tax evasion even though they are far from innocent.

Delusions and Illusions

A less extravagant factor that might explain the absence of taxpayers' resistance to statist exploitation might be provided by some kind of "money illusion." Since nominal per capita income has increased year after year since 1960, people might have been deluded into believing that they were better off than before. Indeed, even if one takes the cost of government into account by deducting nominal per capita public sector spending from nominal per capita income, the resulting per capita "disposable income" —the amount of resources under private control[9]—has increased yearly since 1960, with only two exceptions. However, these two exceptions are so minor (in 1971 per capita disposable income was 0.35 percent below its 1970 level, and in 1975 it was 1.3 percent below its 1974 level) it is doubtful whether they were in fact noticed by the average Italian. In other words, even net of public spending, nominal per capita disposable income has always increased since 1960. This factor might have prevented the average Italian from asking himself how much government was costing him. However, this hypothesis holds true only if people are concerned with nominal income and disregard the erosion of their purchasing power due to inflation—that is, only if they suffer from money illusion.[10]

I have no doubt that money illusion has played a role with the majority of the people, but only for a limited period of time. After ten consecutive years of double-digit inflation, money illusion must have been eroded. Everybody should be aware that their *real* income is something different from their *nominal* income and that because of inflation one can make more money per year and still be worse off than before. A more fundamental explanation is required: "In terms of its purchasing power, Italy's gdp per head will probably be around $7,300 in 1982, almost equal to the probable $7,550 of Britain. Italy has been catching up fast. While Britain's gdp grew by an average of barely 1.6% in the five years to 1980, Italy's grew by an average of nearly 4%. That made it western Europe's fastest growing major economy, and it was achieved during the oil-shocked 1970s by the one big European country that has had to import nearly all its energy."[11]

The invisibility of taxes . . . goes a long way in explaining how a country of ingenious tax evaders can end up sacrificing more than half of its income . . .

Almost everybody agrees that economic growth is desirable. It can, however, have unpleasant implications, and not necessarily of the kind lamented by ecologists and assorted doomsayers. One such consequence of economic growth is that it hides the growth of statism from the taxpayer. While the Italian underground economy was busy making the country prosper and grow, politicians and bureaucrats were exploiting economic growth to their advantage to finance the rapid growth of public sector spending.

The average taxpayer, however, has not been aware of the increased degree of statist exploitation because, thanks to economic growth, his disposable income has increased even in real terms despite the rapid growth in public sector spending. In other words, taxpayers have had no strong incentive to become informed about their real tax burden because their personal real welfare was increasing. The situation is, however, changing, and it might very well be that past trends will not be allowed to continue. But look at the figures in Table 3, opposite.

Table 3 shows that real per capita GDP has increased since 1960 with only two exceptions, 1975 and 1981. Real per capita public sector spending has increased since 1960 with only two exceptions, 1974 and 1979.

During these twenty-two years, real per capita GDP increased substantially. In 1981 it was two and a third times greater than in 1960 (1960 = 100, 1981 = 233).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Real per capita public sector spending, however, increased much faster. In 1981 it was almost four times greater than in 1960 (1960 = 100, 1981 = 371). The two declines in real per capita public sector spending have been small (−1.7 percent and −3.1 percent, respectively) and have been followed immediately by a vigorous resumption of the upward trend. As in the case of the deficit, it might well be that the two exceptions (in twenty-two years) to the rule that government spending—in real per capita terms—can only increase were more apparent than real, possibly due to accounting gimmickry. Be that as it may, what needs to be stressed is that even though real per capita income has been growing rapidly, per capita public sector spending has been growing much more rapidly.

The more important set of figures for our purposes, however, is that related to real per capita income net of public spending, what we have called real per capita disposable income. This figure measures the real value of the average Italian's income over which he has command. From 1960 to 1981 there have been six exceptions to the general rule of yearly growth in these figures—1965, 1971, 1975, 1978, 1980, and 1981. Over the whole period real per capita disposable income has increased 66 percent (1960 = 100, 1981 = 166). It would, however, be misleading to consider the declines as isolated exceptions to the general upward trend. To begin with, the first two declines were small (−1.3 percent and −5.1 percent, respectively), and they have been followed by a continuation of the rapid growth in personal welfare. The last four declines, instead, have been concentrated in the last seven years, and if taken together, they have been substantial. In particular, real per capita disposable income in 1981 was only marginally above its 1970 level (1.3 percent higher). In twelve years it had increased a meager 1.3 percent, compared with the 63.9 percent increase of the previous eleven years. Also, in 1981 real per capita disposable income was 8 percent below its 1974 level.

. . . it is unlikely that the Italian government will be able to finance a deficit equal to 15 percent of GDP without disastrous economic consequences.

In other words, in the first two decades under consideration, the Italian economy grew vigorously. Real per capita income increased 62.8 percent from 1960 to 1969, and 31.4 percent from 1970 to 1979. Most of the increase, however, has been absorbed by an insatiable Leviathan so that the average Italian has seen the rate of growth of real disposable income go down. Although it increased 53.4 percent from 1960 to 1969 and 6.2 percent from 1970 to 1979, in recent years it has started to decline on a fairly regular basis. The reason for this is the explosive growth of public sector spending. From 1974 to 1981 real per capita income *increased* 15.5 percent while real disposable per capita income *declined* 8 percent. During the same period, real per capita public sector spending increased 51.2 percent, and the government deficit increased fivefold.

In terms of personal welfare, statism is pushing Italy back toward the levels that prevailed decades ago. It would seem highly unlikely that Italians will not notice such a pronounced phenomenon. As long as the real income under their control was growing year after year, it was understandable that they could be deceived by the invisibility of taxes and fail to notice the growth in the real cost of government. But now that the real income under their control not only fails to grow but is beginning to decline, they will have a strong incentive to become informed about the real cost of government and try to see through the invisibility of taxes. Furthermore, taxes are becoming less invisible, thanks to inflation and bracket creep. Income taxes amounted to 6.1 percent of net national income in 1970; they've increased to 14.2 percent in 1981. As a result, even labor union leaders are

TABLE 3

	Per Capita GDP (A)	Per Capita Public Sector Spending (B)	Per Capita Disposable Income (A − B)		Per Capita GDP (A)	Per Capita Public Sector Spending (B)	Per Capita Disposable Income (A − B)
1960	L 2,984,205	L 975,835	L 2,008,370	1971	L 5,330,688	L 2,206,905	L 3,123,783
1961	3,214,161	1,079,958	2,134,203	1972	5,495,080	2,258,478	3,236,602
1962	3,413,622	1,164,045	2,249,577	1973	5,893,014	2,439,708	3,453,306
1963	3,583,757	1,225,645	2,358,112	1974	6,025,598	2,398,188	3,627,410
1964	3,690,054	1,291,519	2,398,535	1975	5,775,637	2,720,325	3,055,312
1965	3,776,096	1,408,484	2,367,612	1976	6,161,516	2,852,782	3,308,734
1966	3,986,757	1,459,153	2,527,604	1977	6,298,315	2,922,418	3,375,897
1967	4,271,983	1,546,458	2,725,525	1978	6,528,724	3,401,465	3,127,259
1968	4,547,884	1,723,648	2,824,236	1979	6,789,206	3,292,765	3,496,441
1969	4,858,740	1,778,299	3,080,441	1980	7,017,332	3,529,718	3,487,614
1970	5,167,265	1,875,717	3,291,548	1981	6,961,160	3,626,764	3,334,396

All figures in constant 1981 prices. Source: A. Martino & E. Del Colle, *op. cit.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

learning English terms and economic concepts and complain about the impact of the fiscal drag on their members.

The above figures show the prevailing conditions over the twenty-two-year period. Even though the country has grown rather satisfactorily, the rate of real per capita income growth dropped between 1970 and 1979 to 50 percent of its level in the previous decade. Government spending has grown much more rapidly in real per capita terms, so the percentage of GDP absorbed by government has been increasing. In 1981 it was 60 percent higher than in 1960. It seems obvious that such a tendency cannot continue very long when government (at all levels) already absorbs more than half of national income. Sooner or later, the tendency must change.

However, this is only part of the story. If one looks at the factors that have made government growth possible, one must conclude that not only is much more growth doubtful, but it is also unlikely to remain at its present levels. The first factor that allowed government to grow was the invisibility of taxes. This largely meant an increase in deficit-financed government spending; the percentage of government spending not financed by explicit taxes was more than five times higher in 1981 than in 1960. However, it is unlikely that the Italian government will be able to finance a deficit equal to 15 percent of GDP without disastrous economic consequences. In the past it was possible to bear extravagant government deficits without excessive damage because the savings rate was relatively high. At the beginning of the 1960s, Italians were saving roughly one fifth of their income, thus allowing the government to borrow extensively from the market. The consequence was a somewhat slower rate of growth and some inflation to the extent that the government deficit resulted in an increase in the rate of growth of the quantity of money. On the other hand, while today the government deficit has exploded (in nominal terms, in real terms, and as a percentage of GDP), the savings rate has dropped sharply; the propensity to save has gone from 20.1 percent in 1961 to 9.7 percent in 1981. It is no longer possible, therefore, to finance the deficit in a noninflationary, nonrecessionary way. For the deficit to remain at its present level, the government has to crowd out private investment completely, or monetize the debt, speeding up inflation as a consequence, or—which is even more likely—do both of the above. The attempt to keep the deficit at its present level, therefore, would very likely lead to a sharp increase in stagflation—inflation-cum-stagnation, if not recession.

The decline in the savings rate must have come as a surprise to those Keynesian economists who relied on Keynes's prediction that as a rule a greater proportion of income will be saved as real income increases.[12] On the contrary, the increase in real per capita income has been accompanied by a decline in the proportion of income saved, so the increase in the government deficit, far from being expansionary (as it would be in a Keynesian world), is proving to be recessionary.

The decline in the savings rate cannot, as we have seen, be attributed to a decline in real per capita GDP. What then has caused it? Lack of opportunities open to small savers is not an explanation, for it has been going on for a long time. It might very well be that the decline in the savings rate has been produced by the decline in real disposable per capita income: Italians are becoming more aware of it. An interesting corollary of this hypothesis is that Italians do not consider government services part of their income, at least not to the extent of their cost. Given the proverbial inefficiency of their government, this is not surprising.

The first option open to the government is to leave the deficit at its present level and plunge the country into a serious inflation-cum-recession. The second alternative would be to try to reduce the deficit, but this would involve a decrease in spending, or an increase in taxes, or both. If the government tries to maintain the present level of statist exploitation and refuses to cut spending, it will have to increase explicit taxes. Italians will, therefore, become more aware of the cost of government. Whether there is an increase in "slumpflation" (if the government leaves the deficit as it is) or an increase in explicit taxes (aimed at reducing the deficit), Italians will learn a healthy lesson on the costs of statism. The only way out of the dilemma would be a decline in spending. But, even assuming that such an option is open to governments with a very limited life expectancy, it is certainly not easy.

Italians do not consider government services part of their income . . . Given the proverbial inefficiency of their government, this is not surprising.

It can be argued that since the costs of a reduction in government spending come first, whereas the benefits come later, no rational government with a life expectancy of less than a year will engage in such a policy. The alternatives, however, are probably worse. No government wants to preside over a very serious economic crisis or enact a sharp increase in explicit taxes. No matter what policy is chosen, the damaging consequences of government growth can no longer be kept hidden from the public.

Things are made far worse for the government by the decline in real disposable per capita income because Italians now have an incentive to become better informed about the cost of government, and if they discover that more than half of their income goes to the tax man, it is doubtful they will approve. Furthermore, the decline in real per capita disposable income will also have a negative impact on the savings rate, which in turn will add to the problem. It would seem as if the long process of statist exploitation has finally come to an end: Statism is bankrupt.

It is hard to tell what form a tax rebellion might take in Italy: increased tax evasion, a protest vote, or what? But, as George III and Louis XVI would confirm, one can never tell how tax revolts will end.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

References

1. V. Pareto, "State Expenditures in Italy as Compared with the National Wealth," *The Economic Journal,* Sept. 1892, pp. 561–564.
2. R. Rose, "The Makings of a Do-It-Yourself Tax Revolt," *Public Opinion,* Aug.–Sept. 1980, especially pp. 13–14. For an analysis of the connection between tax evasion and the underground economy, see A. Martino, "Measuring Italy's Underground Economy," *Policy Review,* No. 16, Spring 1981, pp. 87–106.
3. C. Cosciani, "La reforma del impuesto sobre la renta de las personas fisicas," p. 195; V. Visco, "Chi paga veramente le tasse in Italia," *La Repubblica,* Jan. 12, 1983.
4. M. Friedman, "The Limitations of Tax Limitation," *Policy Review,* No. 5, Summer 1978, pp. 7–14.
5. M. Fratianni and F. Spinelli, "The Growth of Government in Italy: Evidence from 1861 to 1979," unpublished paper. The authors' estimates differ from those in our table because they look at the ratio of government spending to net national income at current prices, rather than to gross domestic product.
6. J. T. Bennett and M. H. Johnson, *Better Government at Half the Price: Private Production of Public Services* (Caroline House Publishers, 1981), Table 2, p. 5.
7. A. Martino, *Constraining Inflationary Government* (Washington, D.C.: The Heritage Foundation, 1982), p. 49.
8. See *I conti degli Italiani,* vol. XVI, ed. 1982, Instituto Centrale di Statistica, Roma.
9. The author's term differs from the U.S. definition of disposable income, which describes private sector income less taxes but plus government transfer and interest payments. —*Ed.*
10. In nominal terms, effectively disposable income has increased very rapidly since 1960, despite the growth of public spending, because of inflation. Thus: 1960 = 100.0; 1970 = 239.8; 1980 = 944.4; 1981 = 1,071.8.
11. *The Economist,* Aug. 14, 1982, p. 11.
12. J. M. Keynes, *General Theory* (1936; New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1964), p. 97.

The Spring/Summer 1983 issue of

This World

is now off press. Its contents include such thoughtful and provocative articles as

Foreign Policy, "The American Way," and the Passing of the Post-War Consensus
by Allan C. Carlson

Who Put the Wrong in "Wrongful Births"?
by Terry Eastland

The Market, Planning, Capitalism and Democracy
by Giovanni Sartori

"Cosmos," Cosmologies, and the Public Schools
by Richard A. Baer, Jr.

This World is available at selected news outlets and in quality bookstores at $4 per copy, or by subscription at $16 for four issues, $32 for eight issues.

Michael A. Scully, *Editor* Philip N. Marcus, *Executive Publisher*

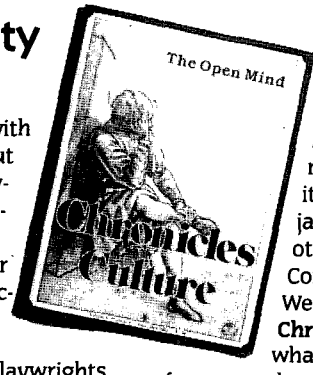
Published by the Institute for Educational Affairs and the
American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research
Editorial & subscription offices: 210 East 86th Street Sixth Floor New York, New York 10028

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

AT LAST, A JOURNAL OF OPINION THAT'S DECIDEDLY NON-LIBERAL

"IT HAS BEEN A PLEASURE TO WATCH LEOPOLD TYRMAND AND THE CHRONICLES OF CULTURE CONFRONT—A LA ORWELL—THE SMELLY LITTLE ORTHODOXIES OF OUR TIME."—TOM WOLFE

Here's your opportunity to read a copy—free!



Imagine! A journal of opinion that begins with that fresh perspective, and then goes about the business of reviewing, criticizing, essaying each month—in little danger of fraternizing with other magazines.

In each issue of **Chronicles**, we invite our readers **to think along with us** as we puncture the pompous ideas—and old-idea repeaters—of our time.

Everywhere one turns, liberal writers, playwrights, reviewers, editors and such are gushing over the most mediocre of themes—and each other.

Flaming liberals, doused monthly.

Alas, liberalism's leading product is the gaseous re-oxygenation of old, trite, tried-and-compromised ideas.

To stand aside virtually guarantees that the most noxious of dull material will be revived by an adoring Liberal Media Establishment.

Thus, our mission is clear. Every month, we shall drench these disseminators of fiery nonsense with unrelenting observations and critique.

Too many "hurrahs" for average performances.

In an era when the standing ovation is frequently offered for the most desultory performances—on stage, on film or on paper—we feel bound to cast a somewhat more critical eye than the mass media critics.

The Liberal Follies, exposed.

Another theme that delights our readers in every issue:

Our examination of what passes today for **Liberal Culture**.

We lace each issue of **Chronicles** with vignettes culled from the self-important follies-creators of our time. And our editors take some satisfaction in commenting on the absurdities and ironies of liberal attitudes.

At last, there exists a magazine **worth** reading for its originality, its zest, its willingness to examine books, film, jazz, theater, politics, the press and other institutions with no concern for Consensus or Conventional Wisdom.

We invite you to read the next issue of **Chronicles of Culture** free. If you like what you read, we welcome you as one of our regular subscribers. But you deserve a free sampling before your final decision.

Simply forward the enclosed Subscription Request and Free Issue Offer coupon. But do it today, so we may send you our freshest issue immediately.

If you are **decidedly non-liberal** in outlook, we believe you will find what we have to say—and how we have to say it in the pages of **Chronicles of Culture**—exactly what you have been looking for!

Chronicles of Culture
934 North Main Street • Rockford, Illinois 61103

I wish to judge **Chronicles of Culture** for myself. Enroll me as a potential subscriber and send me your current issue free.

☐ Bill me for $18.00 (12 monthly issues). If I'm not satisfied with my first issue I'll write "cancel" on the invoice and return it unpaid. No further obligation on my part.

☐ Check for $18.00 is enclosed. Please start my subscription now.

NAME_____

ADDRESS_____

CITY_____ STATE_____ ZIP_____

Chronicles of Culture T8315
NON-LIBERAL CRITICISM AT ITS BEST.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Cost of Living

Life, Liberty, and Cost-Benefit Analysis

Thomas G. Marx

More lives could always be saved if society spent more for kidney dialysis, cancer research, highway safety barriers, pollution controls, stringent plant safety standards, and the like. But society is not prepared to save lives at any cost—and it is also not prepared to admit this openly. Yet when decision makers choose not to fund particular life-saving programs, they are implicitly determining that the additional lives that would be saved are not worth the added cost. Because the amount of society's resources that can be allocated to such programs is limited, these implicit decisions affect the number of lives saved for any given level of expenditure. Because the population's exposure to risk varies by income, age, sex, race, occupation, and geographical location, these implicit decisions also have consequences for whose lives will or will not be saved.

Why do we spend millions of dollars to save one life on the factory floor when those same dollars could save numerous lives on the highway?

The valuations of life implicit in the expenditures for different life-saving programs differ dramatically. For example, kidney dialysis treatment costs $270,000 per life saved; the Consumer Product Safety Commission's proposed lawn mower standards cost from $240,000 to $1,900,000 per life saved; and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's coke oven emissions standard is estimated to cost from $4,500,000 to as much as $158,000,000 per life saved.[1] If society assigns an implicit value of $158,000,000 to a steelworker's life, why does it decline to provide mobile cardiac units, which could save a life for less than $2,000? Why do we spend millions of dollars to save one life on the factory floor when those same dollars could save numerous lives on the highway?

By explicitly addressing the consequences of life-saving decisions, cost-benefit analysis can significantly improve the effectiveness of life-saving programs. More lives would be saved, and decisions on whose lives are to be saved and how much money is to be allocated to life-saving programs would be more rational. The biggest challenge to cost-benefit analysis is the necessary explicit quantification of the value of the lives saved.

Two basic approaches, each with several variants, are used to quantify the value of life in cost-benefit analysis. The foregone-earnings method calculates the present value of lost future income resulting from premature death (excluding income generated by capital assets, which are unaffected by the death). The rationale for this method is that it measures the loss of output to society from someone's premature death. The first variant of this approach measures society's loss as the reduction of net output, or production less the individual's consumption. The second variant focuses strictly on the individual, measuring only lost future consumption.

The net-output variant values only the individual's contribution to the rest of society, ignoring the fact that the individual is also a member of society who attaches some considerable value to living. In effect, this method views the individual as a machine, a slave whose only value is production for others. This method has not been used because of its unsavory policy implications: Calculations show that society would benefit from the early death of retirees, the handicapped, and others whose net future output is negative. The consumption variant recognizes the individual, but it also measures only his monetary losses and ignores the losses that his death would pose to other members of society.

Anomalies

The basic foregone-earnings approach has been used frequently, but despite its empirical manageability, it has serious limitations. It measures neither the value of a reduction in the risk of death provided by a life-saving program, nor the value of life in any meaningful sense. Life, after all, is not valued simply for the material goods and services it can produce. By ignoring all nonmonetary losses from premature death, this method greatly understates the value of life. The exclusive focus on monetary values also produces numerous anomalies with important policy implications—a rich man's life would be more highly valued than a poor man's, and a man's life would be worth more than a woman's. For example, studies show that the costs of saving a life by encouraging motorcycle helmet use are the same as those of a cervical cancer program—about $3,000. However, the benefits (that is, the value of the lives saved) figured on discounted future earnings are 55.6 times the cost for the motorcycle program and only 8.9 times the cost of the cervical cancer program.[2]

The second method of valuing lives is based more solidly on economic theory. A fundamental principle of economics is that the value of a good is determined by what individuals are willing to pay for it. An individual

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

would, of course, pay any amount to prevent certain death. But what would he pay for a life-saving program that marginally reduced the statistical probability of premature death? The clear policy implication is that society should pay no more for a life-saving program than the benefiting individuals are willing to pay for it.

For example, if 5,000 individuals exposed to a risk were each willing to pay $200 for a life-saving program that reduced the probability of premature death by 0.001, the government should fund this program only if its cost does not exceed $1,000,000 (5,000 × $200), which is what the program is worth to the individuals at risk as measured by their willingness to pay for it.

To this point, economists have been measuring only what individuals would pay for small reductions in the probability of premature death. In the aggregate, however, these individual decisions imply a value of life of $200,000, since the program will be funded only if its total cost doesn't exceed $1,000,000, or $200,000 per life saved. Society will not spend more than $200,000 to save the life of a member of this group.

The willingness-to-pay calculation is conceptually straightforward. However, since these life-saving programs are not purchased in the market, individuals' willingness to pay for them must be inferred from market behavior or from survey data.

The converse of individuals' willingness to pay for small reductions in the risk of death is their willingness to accept compensation for small increases in the risk of death. And that can be determined from individual behavior in the job market, since employees are compensated for the disagreeable characteristics of their occupations, including the greater risk of death in hazardous jobs. Several studies have estimated the additional risks and compensation for employees in hazardous occupations from which willingness to pay for life-saving programs can be inferred.[3] For example, if the higher risk of death associated with the occupation is 0.002 and the additional compensation for this risk is $300, then society should not spend more than $150,000 ($300 ÷ 0.002) to save a life in this occupational group, since this is the amount the group itself is willing to accept.[4]

Who Benefits?

A fundamentally different approach to estimating individuals' willingness to pay for reductions in the risk of death is based on direct surveys. For example, Jan Acton posed the following hypothetical question to a hundred Bostonians regarding ambulance services for 10,000 people: "In your area, there are about one hundred heart attacks per year. About forty of these persons die. With the heart attack program, only twenty of these people would die. How much would you be willing to pay in taxes per year for the ambulance so that twenty lives could be saved in your community?"[5] The average response of $33 indicates that the value of this life-saving program to each individual is $16,500 (10,000 ÷ 20 × $33).

There are, however, several basic criticisms of valuing lives on the willingness-to-pay procedure. Its basic premise is that the beneficiaries of a government-funded program are better off, while those who bear the costs are, at least, not worse off, since in theory they could be compensated with the payments beneficiaries are willing to make. But for many life-saving programs there is no social transfer mechanism by which the beneficiaries of a life-saving program can actually be made to pay for it—despite their apparent willingness to do so. Therefore, those who bear the costs are worse off.[6]

For example, if chemical workers were willing to pay in aggregate $100,000,000 for reduced exposure to acrylonitrile and the cost of the reduction to society was only $90,000,000 dollars, willingness-to-pay criteria would sanction this life-saving program, since society could be reimbursed from the payments the chemical workers would be willing to make. Social welfare would be improved, since chemical workers would be better off while the rest of society would be at least as well off.

A failure to save known lives at risk because of cost considerations would be an admission that society is willing to sacrifice lives for dollars.

However, because payments cannot actually be extracted from the chemical workers and the rest of society reimbursed, some members of society gain and others lose. Thus, no unambiguous statements can be made about improvements in social welfare.[7]

Another basic economic premise underlying the willingness-to-pay approach is that individual decisions ought to count. But opponents of cost-benefit analysis question whether individuals can assess the value of the reductions in risk of premature death provided by life-saving programs. Indeed, studies show that individuals systematically underestimate the likelihood of low-probability events.[8] The survey method in particular is criticized because the difficulty of valuing small reductions in risk is compounded by the hypothetical nature of the questions. Respondents who know that beneficiaries of the program will not bear the total cost might also overestimate or underestimate the value of a life-saving activity, depending on the extent to which they would benefit from or bear the cost of that program.

Furthermore, say critics of the willingness-to-pay approach, the decisions of individuals who voluntarily accept greater risks are not representative of society's assessment of the value of life-saving programs. Individuals who voluntarily accept greater risks may well be better able to cope with these risks, or they may value their lives less. The approach thus ignores large segments of the population who do not voluntarily take risky jobs.

The conceptual and empirical limitations to the various approaches to valuing lives have led critics to reject any use of explicit cost-benefit analysis for evaluating life-saving programs. But economists, even though they disagree about the best method, generally agree that all of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the measures provide helpful guideposts that would significantly improve existing decision-making procedures. For example, Professor Zeckhauser concludes: "The search should be for significant insights, useful benchmarks and helpful guidelines, not unequivocal answers. Present procedures are sufficiently haphazard that even a much qualified analytic approach can provide substantial benefits."[9]

The Moral Questions

The fundamental ethical criticism of explicit cost-benefit analysis is that it is immoral to place a dollar value on human life. Critics of capitalism argue that "human values are debased because people are goaded into placing market prices on everything. . ."[10] To such critics, placing a dollar value on human life exemplifies the immorality of the market system.

The economic and moral conflicts over cost-benefit analysis in life-saving situations must be resolved through the political process.

There is, however, a fundamental relationship underlying cost-benefit analysis that is of mutual concern to economics and ethics.[11] Economics is concerned with the means of allocating scarce resources to achieve alternative private and social ends. Ethics is concerned with the determination of right behavior. There are two basic ethical approaches to making such a determination. Utilitarianism judges right behavior by the ends produced; deontology, the ethical theory of moral duty, requires the means to be consistent with moral obligations. Bertrand Russell is undoubtedly correct when he states that in most circumstances both approaches are needed to determine what is right behavior:

> In judging of conduct we find at the outset two widely divergent methods, of which one is advocated by some moralists, the other by others, while both are practiced by those who have no ethical theory. One of these methods, which is that advocated by utilitarians, judges the rightness of an act by relation to the goodness or fairness of its consequences. The other method, advocated by intuitionists, judges by the approval or disapproval of the moral sense or conscience. I believe that it is necessary to combine both theories in order to get a complete account of right and wrong. There is, I think, one sense in which a man does right when he does what will probably have the best consequences, and another in which he does right when he follows the dictates of his conscience, whatever the probable consequences may be.[12]

Within this means-ends context, it is clear that the ethical criticisms are against excessive reliance upon utilitarian justifications for cost-benefit analysis. The mistake of proponents of cost-benefit analysis is to emphasize the ends (efficient resource allocation) to the exclusion of deontological concerns for the means. If we could assess the moral implications of assigning dollar values to human life, we could determine whether improvements in allocative efficiency from cost-benefit analysis outweighed any offenses to human morality and dignity—what we may call demoralization costs. The circumstances that would be offensive include the following:

- If the lives at risk are identifiable individually or as a class. When used to value the lives of specific individuals rather than abstract, statistical lives, explicit cost-benefit analysis would deny the infinite value of life and also result in some lives' being valued more highly than others, contradicting our fundamental belief that all persons are created equal.
- If there is a direct, predictable relationship between public expenditures and the loss of life due to an involuntarily incurred risk. By placing the individual's fate in the hands of society, explicit cost-benefit analysis here would unmistakably deny the infinite value of life.
- If the group at risk is economically or socially disadvantaged. People with preexisting grievances are likely to perceive explicit cost-benefit analysis as calculated exploitation. Their fears would be compounded if analysis employed the foregone-earnings approach, which would assign them a lower value of life.

A failure to save known lives at risk because of cost considerations would be an admission that society is willing to sacrifice lives for dollars. Demoralization costs here would be intolerable. Imagine the moral impact on a society that witnessed the death of trapped mine workers because the cost of rescue exceeded the value of their lives or because it was determined that the resources could be more effectively used to broaden road shoulders on a busy highway.

In this and other, similar circumstances, such as air and sea disasters and kidney dialysis treatment, society is willing to allocate substantially more resources than it would allocate to programs that would save a greater number of unknown, statistical lives.

Alas! Poor Bosworth!

When the risk is involuntarily assumed or very costly for the individual to avoid, as with workplace exposure to potential carcinogens or kidney disease, society's moral obligation to save lives is much greater than when the risks are voluntarily assumed, as in the case of lung cancer from smoking or a traffic accident from not wearing a seat belt. Cost-benefit analysis is not necessary in these latter circumstances because in assuming the known risk, the individuals themselves balanced benefits against costs. Society therefore does not have the same moral obligation to save those lives and, indeed, must weigh its responsibility for the safety of its members against its moral duty to preserve the individual's right to choose.

Both of those dimensions of demoralization costs—known identity of the victims and involuntarily incurred risk—are vividly illustrated by a fable spun by Steve

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Babson.[13] Mr. Babson strikingly reveals the moral turpitude of cost-benefit analysis with a supposed kidnapping of Barry Bosworth, former head of the Council on Wage and Price Stability and a proponent of cost-benefit analysis. Mr. Bosworth's kidnappers demand a $6,000,000 ransom. Unfortunately for Mr. Bosworth, that sum far exceeds his $1,400,000 discounted future earnings, the figure used by the council staff to value his life. Thus, "Our fable ends, and so, alas, does poor Bosworth."[14] Mr. Babson's point is that this fable illustrates what occurs routinely with the use of cost-benefit analysis to evaluate workplace safety standards, highway traffic safety, cancer research, kidney dialysis, or any other life-saving program.

Because of demoralization cost considerations, however, Mr. Bosworth would be saved. The identity of the victim is known, and the risks are completely involuntary and beyond his control. In such circumstances society is prepared to spend vast sums to save lives. Society, however, would not be prepared to spend such amounts to save Mr. Bosworth, and even less prepared to save statistical lives, from voluntarily assumed risks like smoking, careless driving, or mountain climbing.

The third instance that would generate large demoralization costs is if the people at risk are disadvantaged. A failure to allocate resources to sickle-cell anemia research, for example, would be unpalatable because of the economically disadvantaged status of blacks in addition to the known identity of the group (though not the individuals) and the involuntary nature of the risk.

Thus, demoralization cost considerations would weigh heavily against the use of explicit cost-benefit analysis to justify kidney dialysis programs, sickle-cell anemia research, and rescue operations, but they support its use for evaluating highway safety expenditures and treatment of smoking-related diseases. The recognition of demoralization costs thus provides a method for reconciling the fundamental means-ends conflict and a systematic basis for the eclectic use of cost-benefit analysis in life-saving situations.

Enter Politics

The economic and moral conflicts over cost-benefit analysis in life-saving situations must be resolved through the political process. Political decision making differs from private decision making in several respects. The decisions affect the lives of others, they are binding on all, and they typically confer benefits on one group and costs on another. Since collective decisions must also reflect democratic principles of political equality, they must give greater weight to distributional justice than private market decisions, which emphasize economic efficiency. Because of these differences, society may not wish to utilize explicit cost-benefit analysis for public decision making. Professor Zeckhauser explains:

> Acceptance of the importance of process in life valuation has some discomforting implications, particularly for those who are trained to the use of analysis. We may find that we are spending $100,000 to save a life in one area, but sacrificing lives in others that could be saved for an expenditure of $10,000. The consequence is that with a reallocation of resources toward the latter area we could have both more lives and more money. Yet, if the decisions in the two areas were well accepted by the society, then it might be preferable not to change. Lives and dollars are sacrificed in return for more satisfaction with the way these decisions have been made.[15]

Economists may bemoan this trade-off, but given their acceptance of individual preferences elsewhere, they cannot object if society wishes to balance lives against satisfaction with the fairness and morality of the decision-making process as well as the cost of saving lives. Similar considerations of due process in the legal profession mitigate against the use of explicit cost-benefit analysis. Economists also quickly note, however, that since every life-saving decision carries with it an implicit valuation of life, explicit cost-benefit analysis is not inconsistent with accepted political values and decision-making processes. Robert Smith, for example, states: "It is more honest and useful to quantify these benefits explicitly than it is to pretend one is 'above' such a 'dollar-and-cents' approach and then value the benefits implicitly."[16]

Economic efficiency is a critical element in decisions when resources are inadequate to satisfy society's broad desires to protect life.

Explicit cost-benefit analysis establishes the value of life in advance as a key variable in the decision. The outcome is then largely determined by the arithmetic. Implicit decision-making procedures are not based on such calculations. The decision makers are not aware of the implicit value assigned to the lives at risk until after the decision has been made: "The decision maker would see himself as simply having made a deliberative judgment; the 'end effect' [cost-benefit] equivalency number did not play a causal role in the decision but at most merely reflects it."[17] For example, the estimated cost (and implicit value) of $158,000,000 per life saved by coke emission standards or $625,000,000 per life saved by acrylonitrile standards did not enter into OSHA's evaluations of these programs.

Making Society Safe

The same distinction exists for collective decisions based on individual willingness-to-pay calculations. An individual's willingness to pay for small reductions in the risk of premature death is also not based on explicit dollar estimates of the value of life. The value of life that these decisions imply is known only after the decisions have been made and aggregated. Thus, it can be reasonably argued that public decisions reflecting individuals' willingness to pay for reductions in risk are no more

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

based on explicit dollars-and-cents estimates of the value of life than deliberative judgment procedures.

Because the allocation of resources to life-saving programs is decided by elected representatives, the private political costs and benefits to these decision makers also enter the debate. Explicit cost-benefit analysis has substantial costs for political decision makers when its use reduces their probability of reelection by disgruntled (demoralized) voters. Politicians therefore eschew explicit cost-benefit analysis more than is justified by economic, demoralization cost, or process considerations. For example, Congress mandated that workplaces be "free of hazard" and specified "zero discharge" of pollutants into waterways, not that water pollution be reduced until the marginal benefits equaled the incremental cost. Indeed, there is little mention of costs in any of the numerous regulations enacted throughout the 1970s.[18]

Unwarranted Bias

Another political consideration is the role that private interest groups play. Because the benefits and costs of life-saving programs fall on different sectors of society, private interest groups actively support programs from which they benefit regardless of total costs to society, while opposing other programs whose benefits exceed the costs. For example, the Oil and Chemical Workers Union has argued that "Congress mandated very specifically that the workplace should be free of hazards. It didn't say the workplace should be free from hazards only if the employer could afford it, or only if it wouldn't cost him too much money."[19] The United Steel Workers Union found it "despicable" that anyone should question coke-fume standards estimated to cost at least $4,500,000 per worker saved.[20]

Whether a life-saving program benefits the few while costing the many or vice versa, public policy is not likely to favor efficient allocation of resources. In the first instance—when benefits accrue to a small, identifiable group but costs are spread across society—the beneficiaries oppose explicit cost-benefit analysis. The general public tends to be indifferent to the cost of any particular life-saving program, even one that benefits the few, since when spread across society, the cost is small. Furthermore, the public is not easily organized for political action on such issues. Thus, there is unwarranted opposition and indifference to cost-benefit analysis.

In the second case—when society at large benefits from a life-saving program whose cost falls on a small group—those who bear the burden advocate explicit cost-benefit analysis, hoping to reduce their burden. The result here is a bias in favor of cost-benefit analysis.

A failure to reconcile significant differences in economic, moral, and political values has stymied progress toward more effective allocation of resources to life-saving programs. Proponents of explicit cost-benefit analysis have been slow to recognize the moral and political implications of their solution, and critics have been singularly unimpressed with allocative efficiency arguments. The predictable results have been, respectively, blanket endorsements and rejections of cost-benefit analysis. Cost-benefit analysis has become the rallying cry of regulatory reform; its critics see it as "the invention of those who do not wish to regulate, or to be regulated . . ."[21] Neither polar position is warranted.

Economic efficiency is a critical element in decisions when resources are inadequate to satisfy society's broad desires to protect life. However, the moral dimensions of life-saving decisions—the demoralization costs—are equally important. The methods for allocating resources must also preserve the social, moral, and political integrity of the collective decision-making process—concerns that must be distinguished from interest-group pressures.

Ends and Means

Progress toward more effective life-saving programs must be built upon greater recognition of the complex trade-offs of competing social values. Proponents of cost-benefit analysis cannot continue to exclude moral and political goals from calculations of allocative efficiency. Opponents cannot push a life-saving agenda that ignores the economic consequences.

Professor Schultze explains why both are wrong. "Ends and means cannot and should not be separated. In the real world they are inextricably joined: we formulate our ends only as we debate the means of satisfying them. No electorate or politician can afford to turn over the crucial question of how social intervention is to be designed to supposedly apolitical experts."[22]

Ends and means, then, must be reconciled. Cost-benefit analysis can be neither advanced nor rejected as a general proposition. Each life-saving decision must give explicit consideration to both the ends sought and the means of achieving them. Gains in economic efficiency from explicit cost-benefit analysis must be weighed against demoralization costs and the social and moral acceptability of the decision. Only then will society benefit from more efficient allocation of resources to life-saving programs.

References

1. M. J. Bailey, *Reducing Risks to Life* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1980), p. 26.
2. S. E. Rhoades, "How Much Should We Spend to Save a Life?" in *The Public Interest* (Spring 1978), p. 79.
3. For example, R. Thaler and S. Rosen, "The Value of Saving a Life" in *Household Production and Consumption,* N. E. Terleckyj, Ed. (New York: National Bureau of Economic Research, 1976); and R. S. Smith, "Compensating Wage Differentials and Public Policy: A Review" in *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* (April 1979), pp. 339-351.
4. A similar procedure for estimating individuals' willingness to pay for small reductions in risk from observations of market behavior is based on automobile seat belt use. The time and inconvenience costs of using seat belts are calculated and related to the reduction in risk from seat belt use. The cost individuals voluntarily incur to reduce the risk of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

death by using seat belts evidences their willingness to pay for small reductions in the risk of death. See G. Blomquist, "Value of Life Saving: Implications of Consumption Activity" in *Journal of Political Economy*, 87, No. 3 (1979), pp. 540-558.

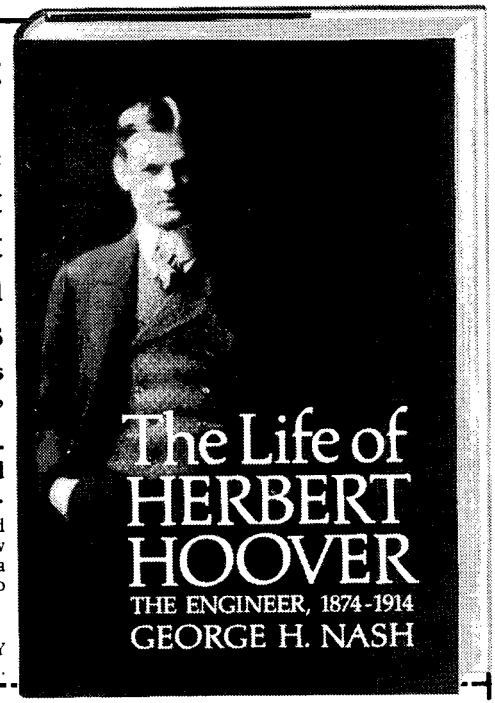
5. S. E. Rhoades, *op. cit.*, p. 81.
6. This, of course, is not a valid criticism when society in general benefits from the life-saving programs (e.g., medical research or improved national air-quality standards) so that there is no meaningful distinction between those who benefit and those who bear the cost. It should also be noted that the losses to those who bear the cost of the life-saving program are offset to some degree by their increased satisfaction from the reduction in the loss of other lives.
7. Social welfare is measured against the criterion of Pareto Optimality. A distribution of resources is Pareto Optimal if no alternative distribution exists that would make at least one member of society better off without making another worse off. Nothing objective can be said about alternative distributions that benefit some members of society while making others worse off, since this involves interpersonal comparisons of utility.
8. H. J. Otway, "The Quantification of Social Values," a paper presented at the symposium "Risk vs. Benefit Analysis: Solution or Dream," Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory, Los Alamos, N.M., February 1972; and H. Kunreuther, "Protection against Natural Hazards: A Lexicographic Approach," Discussion Paper No. 45, Fels Center of Government, University of Pennsylvania, 1974.
9. R. Zeckhauser, "Procedures for Valuing Lives" in *Public Policy*, 23, No. 4 (Fall 1975), p. 462.
10. T. Christoffel, D. Finkelhor, and D. Gilbarg, *Up against the American Myth* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), p. 15.
11. Two other approaches to the allocation of resources to life-saving programs essentially deny this basic means-ends relationship and the consequent necessity for cost-benefit analysis. The romantic approach denies the scarcity of resources (means) available to satisfy society's wants and thus the need to choose among competing goals. The mono-technique method denies the existence of competing social goals (ends) in advocating only the most technologically efficient alternatives with little or no concern for cost.
12. Bertrand Russell, "The Elements of Ethics" in *Reading in Ethical Theory*, W. Sellars and J. Hospers, Eds. (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1952), pp. 9-10.
13. S. Babson, "A Pound of Flesh" in *Technology Review* (November 1979), pp. 12-13.
14. Ibid., p. 12.
15. R. Zeckhauser, *op. cit.*, p. 448.
16. R. Smith, *The Occupational Safety and Health Act* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1976), pp. 36-37.
17. S. Kelman, "Cost-Benefit Analysis, an Ethical Critique" in *Regulation* (January-February 1981), p. 40.
18. W. Lilley III and J. C. Miller III, "The New Social Regulation" in *The Public Interest* (Spring 1977), p. 49.
19. M. J. Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 10.
20. S. E. Rhoades, *op. cit.*, p. 75.
21. B. K. Zimmerman, "Risk-Benefit Analysis: The Cop-Out of Governmental Regulation" in *Trial* (February 1978), p. 44.
22. C. L. Schultze, "The Public Use of Private Interests" in *Regulation* (September-October 1977), p. 14.

Announcing the definitive biography of one of America's most accomplished yet least understood leaders

The first volume examines Hoover's pre-public career, focusing on his rise to pre-eminence as an international mining engineer and businessman. Illustrated.

A specially bound edition, numbered and signed by the author, is now available for advance order for a limited time only. Use coupon to order your copies today.

PUBLISHED BY
W.W. NORTON & COMPANY, INC.

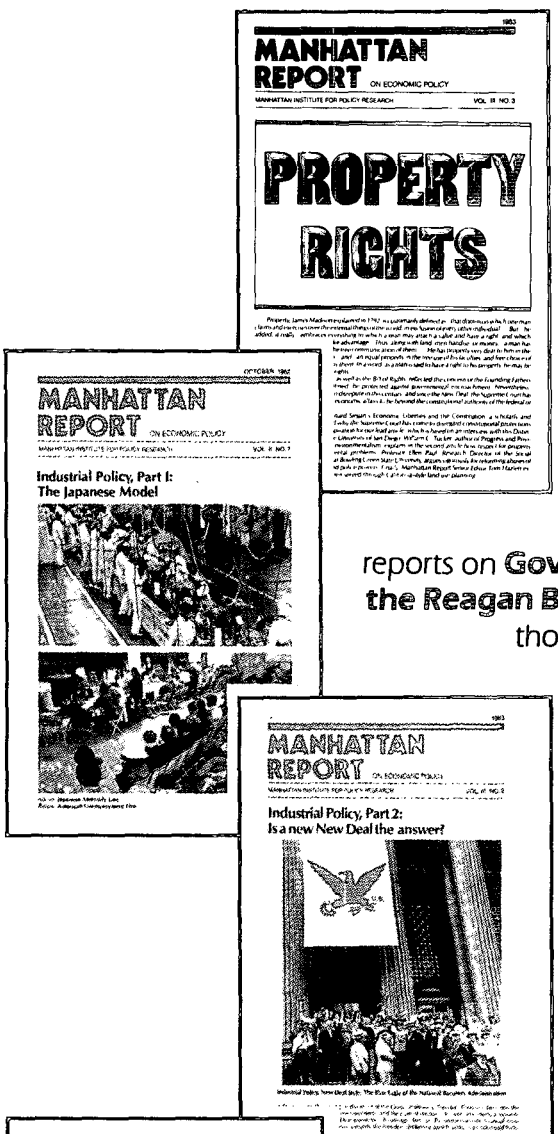


HERBERT HOOVER PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION, INC.
P.O. Box 696, West Branch, Iowa 52358

Please send me___copy(ies) of THE LIFE OF HERBERT HOOVER: The Engineer, 1874-1914 by George H. Nash at $25.00 per book, postpaid. Orders will be filled as received until quantities are exhausted. I enclose a check or money order.

Name_____
Address_____
City_____
State and Zip_____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED


MANHATTAN REPORT ON ECONOMIC POLICY
PROPERTY RIGHTS
MANHATTAN REPORT ON ECONOMIC POLICY
Industrial Policy, Part I:
The Japanese Model
MANHATTAN REPORT
Industrial Policy, Part 2:
Is a new New Deal the answer?
MANHATTAN REPORT ON ECONOMIC POLICY
STATE AGAINST BLACKS

"Mussolini Didn't Make The Trains Run On Time..."

And there's no reason to believe that modern-day proponents of an American "industrial policy" would succeed in redeploying resources effectively, either. So says author and economist Melvyn Krauss in a recent issue of the **Manhattan Report** dealing with the industrial policy debate. That issue, like earlier reports on **Government Funding of the Arts, Social Justice and the Reagan Budget,** and **The State Against Blacks,** is provoking thought and action on significant issues of public policy.

The **Manhattan Report** is often imitated but always one step ahead, providing insights and data on today's fast-breaking policy battlegrounds. Tackling one key economic topic per issue, it's an in-depth briefing in a concise format—a serious small journal whose style and method is unique in the field.

Subscribe today—at the low price of $10.00 for one year—and receive free of charge the three past issues of your choice. Just check the boxes and fill in the coupon below, and you'll begin enjoying the liveliest economics journal in the market.

Please send me the following Manhattan Reports along with my subscription:

- ☐ Industrial Policy Parts I and II
- ☐ Resource Transfers and the Third World
- ☐ Government Funding of the Arts
- ☐ Towards a New MacroEconomic Consensus
- ☐ Is Money a Public Good?
- ☐ Markets and Minorities
- ☐ The State Against Blacks
- ☐ Social Justice and the Reagan Budget
- ☐ Property Rights
- ☐ W.H. Hutt: An Economist for this Century
- ☐ How Fares the European Welfare State?

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Subscription rate is $10.00 a year.

Send coupon to Manhattan Institute for Policy Research
20 West 40th Street, New York, NY 10018 212-354-4144

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Storytelling and Virtue

William Kirk Kilpatrick

In *After Virtue* Alasdair MacIntyre observes that in all classical and heroic societies, "the chief means of moral education is the telling of stories."[1] In a real sense the heroes of *The Illiad* and *The Odyssey* were the moral tutors of the Greeks. Likewise, Aeneas was the model of heroic piety on which young Romans were nurtured. Icelandic and Irish children were suckled on sagas. And the Christian world, which reaped the inheritance of both classical and heroic societies, carried on this tradition of moral education with Bible stories, stories from the lives of saints, and stories of chivalry. To be educated properly was to know of Achilles and Odysseus, Hector and Aeneas, and later to know of Beowulf and Arthur and Percival and the Christian story of salvation.

. . . no attempt is made to delinate character in the moral dilemma, whereas character is everything in the heroic story.

The telling of stories does not seem to hold a place of much importance in contemporary attempts at moral education. In most American and Canadian schools the favored methods for developing moral awareness are the moral reasoning approach of Harvard psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg and the values clarification approach developed by University of Massachusetts psychologist Sidney Simon and his colleagues. These models rely heavily on group discussion, analysis of competing claims, and the development of decision-making skills. The closest approximation to a story is the presentation of a moral dilemma: a man contemplates stealing a drug for his dying wife; passengers on a foundering lifeboat decide whether to toss their fellows overboard and who should be sacrificed; survivors in a fallout shelter debate whether to admit outsiders to their sanctuary.

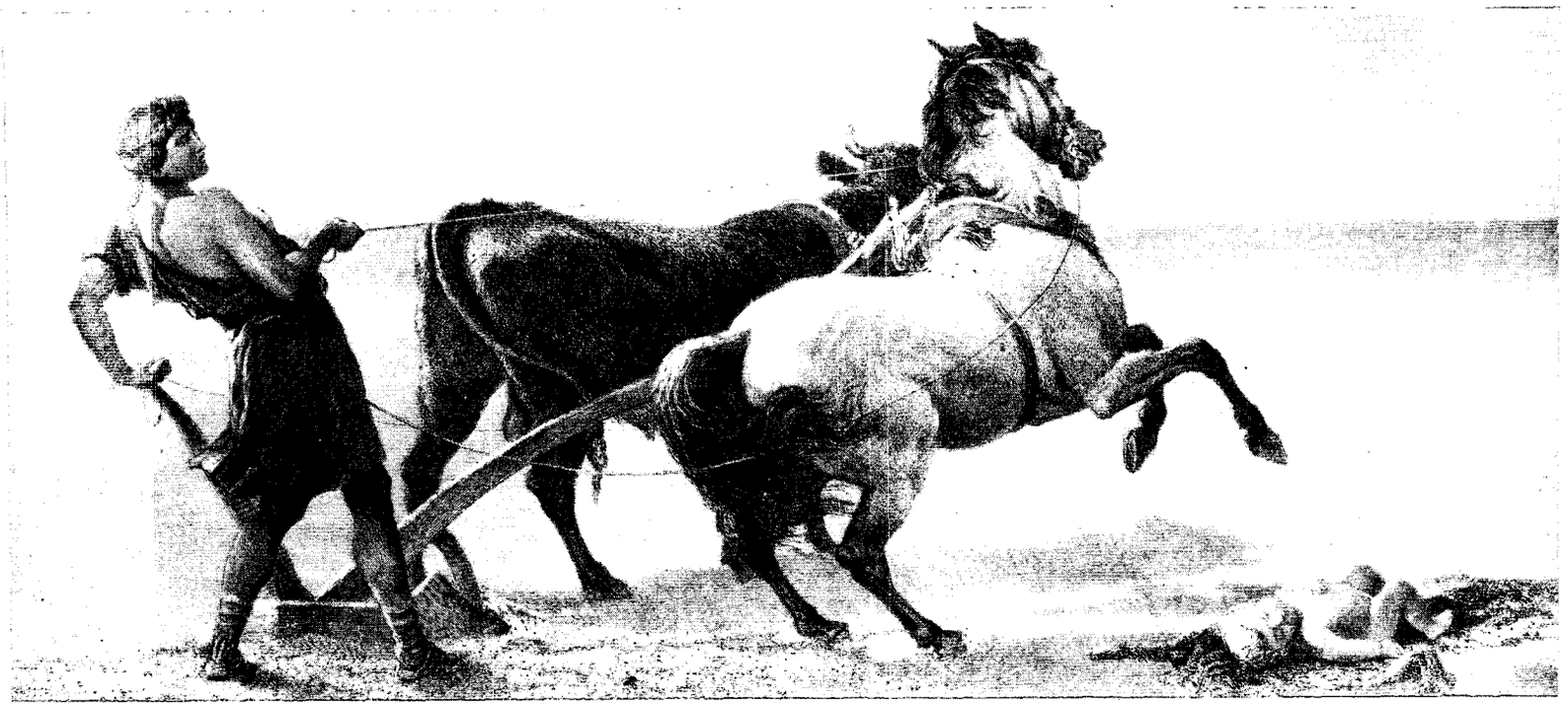
It will be apparent at once that there are important differences between these modern "fables" and the old ones. And the differences give us, in turn, a clue to the differences in thinking that animate the modern as opposed to the classical and Christian approaches to moral education. The first difference is that no attempt is made to delineate character in the moral dilemma, whereas character is everything in the heroic story. In the saga or epic everything revolves around the character of the hero—whether he exercises or fails to exercise the virtues. But the characters in the dilemmas have no characters, only decisions to make. Both Heinz (the man in the purloined drug dilemma) and Ulysses must aid their wives, but there the comparison ends. Heinz is no Ulysses. He is a blank, a cipher. He is there because he is needed to present a dilemma. We have no interest in him, only in his case. One cannot imagine parents passing down to their children the saga of Heinz and the stolen drug.

The second difference is this: The actors in the dilemmas are not tied to any social particularities—traditions, loyalties, locations, or histories. True, Heinz is attached to his wife, but there is no indication why he should be. We know why Ulysses is loyal to Penelope, since her virtues are carefully enumerated. As in all the old stories the hero's deeds are rooted in loyalty not only to homeland and tribe but also to hearth—essential details that are absent from the dilemmas.

It might be objected here that the modern dilemmas are intended not to tell stories but to embody principles or, more properly, the clash of principles: property rights, for example, versus the value of a human life, with the nod presumably going to the more universal value. But this is precisely the point I wish to make, for what is implied in this approach is that particular loves and loyalties—the kind that make for a good story—are largely irrelevant to moral issues. One can somehow dispense with the prelude of moral particularities and leap right into the arena of universal principles. The assumption is that the kernel of good moral judgment lies in abstract devotion to abstract principles. In Kohlberg's scheme, where justice is the sole guiding principle, one must leave mother and father, wife and husband, and cleave to the principle of Justice with a capital *J*. Moreover, there is the suggestion that devotion to father and mother or attachment between wife and husband may have nothing to do with the pursuit of justice. As in so much contemporary psychology, the central concern is with the autonomous individual.

The third difference between the old stories and the new dilemmas is that the new stories, properly speaking, do not have endings. They are open-ended, unfinished. They await your judgment. What should the shelter survivors do next? You decide. Was Heinz right to steal the drug? You decide. There is, in short, no sense that the story is ever complete or definitive. It's up for grabs and will be again next year with the next class. You can do what you want with these stories; you cannot with *The Odyssey*. There is no sense of a life fully lived or a mission completed. All of which amounts to saying that they are

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



In the old epics, like The Odyssey, *the superheroes' qualities do not end with raw power.*

not stories after all. The old storytelling approach to moral education has been replaced with something new.

The new approach is one from which the concepts of character and virtue are entirely missing. From its point of view, the life of a man is envisioned not as a personal story in which accumulated habits and actions may eventually harden into virtue or vice, but as a disconnected series of ethical and other dilemmas—all amenable to rational solution. If we return to the heroic, classical, and Christian stories, we can see how stark this contrast is and how radically novel the new approach is. And although the current techniques of moral education are largely the offspring of psychologists, we may note that the ancients had a more profound grasp of the psychology underlying moral education.

The telling of stories—as opposed to the presentation of open-ended dilemmas—implies first of all that adults have something to pass on to children, a valuable inheritance that children might not come by on their own. This is easy enough to accept about other cultures. "If we were anthropologists observing members of a tribe," writes Andrew Oldenquist, "it would be the most natural thing in the world to expect them to teach their morality and culture to their children and, moreover, to think that they had a perfect right to do so . . . "[2] If we observed, he continues, that a society failed to do these things, we would conclude that they were "ruined, pitiable, alienated from their own values, and on the way out."[3] As I say, this is easy enough to see for other cultures, but when it comes to our own, a certain inhibition against cultural transmission sets in. A pervasive mentality of nondirectiveness and subjectiveness dictates that we don't have the right to impose our values on our children. And consequently, we are forced to create the fiction that each child is in his own right a miniature Socrates—a moral philosopher, as Kohlberg would have it.

The traditional view is that adults do possess a moral treasure, and that to deprive children of it would in itself show a lack of virtue. We do not, to draw a rough analogy, wait until our children have reached the age of reason before suggesting that they brush their teeth. But sooner or later children will be able to figure out for themselves that brushing is a prudent practice. This is not necessarily true of moral practices. The moral treasure can be acquired only in a certain way. And if it is not obtained in that way, it is not possessed at all. This is why Aristotle said that only those who have been well brought up can usefully study ethics. And why Plato maintained that the well-bred youth is nurtured from his earliest days to love the Good and the Beautiful "so that when Reason at length comes to him, then bred as he has been, he will hold out his hands in welcome and recognize her because of the affinity he bears to her."[4]

Just Sentiments

There is little chance that one who does not learn proper affections and just sentiments as a child will ever fully comprehend them. His knowledge, in short, will always be limited. What he can know will be determined by his sentiments, by dispositions and inclinations learned in childhood. A person who is not well habituated to virtue may come upon the fundamental principles of ethics, but he may never be able to grasp them properly. He comes upon them like an anthropologist stumbling upon tribal customs. He can describe them, write about them, analyze them, but he does not know them as an initiate knows them—even though the things he observes are his own cultural values. One cannot begin to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

understand the moral life until one begins to live it. Consequently, the autonomous moral explorer, because of his detached stance, is in no position to appreciate the practice of virtue, let alone practice it himself.

Writing on "the need for an inevitability of moral indoctrination," philosopher Bruce B. Suttle states: "If a person has no moral precepts and sensibilities, then those deficiencies cannot be corrected by offering the person moral reasons and evidence for why he should acquire moral precepts and sensibilities. Without a general moral point of view, without a set of moral precepts and sensibilities, no moral arguments in support of having a moral point of view could be judged convincing, let alone recognized as moral arguments."[5]

What, then, is the proper form of education in regard to morality? It is, necessarily, an initiation, "men transmitting manhood to men," as C. S. Lewis puts it.[6] And this is best accomplished not by direct moral exhortation but indirectly through example and practice. One cannot have classes in moral education. It is, rather, more like an apprentice learning from a master. "Lewis, like Aristotle," writes Gilbert Meilander, "believes that moral principles are learned indirectly from others around us, who serve as exemplars. And he, again like Aristotle, suggests that it will be extremely difficult to develop virtuous individuals apart from a virtuous society."[7]

Yet, even in the most virtuous of societies, adults, recognizing their own shortcomings, have seen the need to point to examples of moral wisdom and moral courage beyond themselves. Hence the reliance on heroic stories as the embodiment of cultural ideals. When virtues have fallen into desuetude, the need for stories about virtuous and courageous men, women, and children becomes more acute. Aware of this, Lewis created in *The Chronicles of Narnia* a literature of virtue of the type that can be considered both exemplar of and preparation for a mature morality. The *Narnia Chronicles* certainly seem to embody Aristotle's dictum that the aim of education is to make the pupil like and dislike what he ought.

But if heroic stories provide examples, we need to ask, examples of what? It would be a mistake to look upon the heroes of myth and epic as examples of autonomous moral agents or inventors of new moralities (as Nietzsche did), just as it would be a mistake to look upon them as stoic rule-abiders. The heroes of such stories are not moral philosophers, nor are they stoic. They are virtuous, or they strive to be virtuous. For classical and heroic societies and for those that sustain those traditions, morality is not a matter of following rules or making rules; it has to do with acquiring virtue. The virtues displayed by Achilles are what hold our attention, not any set of maxims he may expound. It is his loyalty to his friends that matters, not his loyalty to principle. Virtues are displayed in his actions, not only in what he says. The heroic man is not a moral pioneer who charts new ethics; rather, he is someone who does what ought to be done.

Even in the Gospel stories, the heroic theme is predominant. As I have written elsewhere, "there is nothing in Christ's attitude about himself to suggest that he saw himself mainly as a teacher. There is a strong suggestion that Jesus looked upon himself as someone who had a job to do. And the quality of that task was not unlike the quest of a Greek or Roman hero."[8] Christ does what is required. He comes to do the will of him by whom he was sent. He lays down his life for his friends, not for the sake of a principle.

Indeed, in the heroic literature there is usually very little question about what has to be done (most of the moral dilemmas in the Gospels are posed by the Pharisees); the question is whether the hero can resist temptation and do what he ought to do. Will his training in the virtues see him through?

What is revealed in heroic stories is a profoundly realistic appraisal of behavior under conditions of combat—when it is dangerous to act as one ought or a price will have to be paid. When the hero is weary, outnumbered, or alone, when his resources are depleted or temptation is overwhelming, he does better to rely on his acquired virtue than on his knack for moral philosophy. Likewise, most of us are thrown into situations where there is little time to weigh the moral pros and cons. Then, the best question we can ask is, what do good men and women do in such situations? We are more likely to find an answer to that question if our training includes a thorough exposure to stories of virtue.

Virtue requires not . . . moral autonomy but certain forms of submission. It requires the acceptance of standards set by others. . . .

There are two other points to be noticed. First, the acquisition of virtue is never an individual project. Virtue is acquired through our own actions but also through the actions of others. Virtue is always, in part, a gift: As MacIntyre notes, "there is no way to possess the virtues except as part of a tradition."[9] Acquiring virtue requires not the exercise of moral autonomy but certain forms of submission. It requires the acceptance of standards set by others and even submission to forms of arduous training. The initiate to the virtuous life is the bearer of a tradition and owes respect to those who bore the tradition before he was born. Virtue, therefore, is rooted in particularities—the particularities of certain traditions, communities, and families. From that starting point one can go on to a more universal morality, but as MacIntyre suggests, the notion of living completely in that universal realm is a dangerous illusion because such a step leads not to virtue but to ideological obsession.

The second point is that training in virtue is an *education sentimentale*. MacIntyre defines virtues as "dispositions not only to act in particular ways but also to feel in particular ways."[10] The good man or woman is one who almost instinctively hates evil and loves what is right. This suggests why the telling of stories is a particularly good method of moral education, for it is widely recognized that stories have the power of eliciting sentiments

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that formal education does not. Stories alone are not sufficient, of course. Literary critic George Steiner reminds us that there is a type of literate person who responds to the cry in the book but turns a deaf ear to the cry in the streets.[11] Other forms of moral training are surely necessary. But since training in virtue is in part an *education sentimentale,* storytelling will be an important part of that training.

A logical corollary to this is that evenhanded, dispassionate discussions of values like those advocated by Kohlberg and Simon may undercut moral sentiments and impart the notion that moral questions are merely intellectual problems rather than human problems that naturally stir strong emotions. The very idea that all things are open to discussion and all values are to be accorded equal respect subtly undermines the virtuous instinct that some things are and ought to be repugnant and contemptible to the well-brought-up person. The nonjudgmental approach may thus tend to neutralize any character training that may have taken place. Once again, this may be good preparation for producing detached anthropologists, but it is a dubious form of moral education. Andrew Oldenquist states the matter well in observing that " 'objective,' noncommittal discussions of our own moral principles, conducted as though one were discussing the mores of some distant tribe about which one cares nothing, will lead young people to sense that it is not *morality* that is being discussed, and, perhaps, to view their own moral community as though it were that distant tribe."[12]

And the erosion of these sentiments . . . contributes to the climate that permits the pornographer, the drug pusher, and the rapist to flourish.

Threshold of Tolerance

If virtue is a matter of habituation, so is vice. In fact, the kind of morally neutral discussion of values mentioned above can easily become a form of desensitization to thinking in terms of either virtue or vice. One gets habituated instead to thinking in terms of rights, wants, and needs. This nonjudgmental atmosphere, which is not confined to the moral education classroom but rather has become all-pervasive, prepares the way for more blatant forms of desensitization. Enter the media with their penchant for discussing any and all topics with the neutral attitude of the talk show host. Enter the advertiser who steadily advances into areas that were once thought too private or too important to be exploited. Enter the sociologists and the psychologists with explanations and excuses for criminal behavior. Enter the gratuitous depiction of violence on the screen. Enter pornography. One becomes used to it all. One's threshold of tolerance is raised higher and higher. Moral sensitivities acquired in childhood—if they ever were acquired—begin to erode.

"Blush, blush, thou lump of foul deformity," cries Lady Anne to Richard III. But like Shakespeare's Richard, many of us have long since lost the capacity to blush. Where habits of virtue do not prosper, it is certain that habituation to vice will. It is important to note that we are talking here primarily about habitual responses, not necessarily about habitual actions. The fact that individuals can continue to refrain from vicious deeds does not prevent a gradual erosion of proper moral sentiments. And the erosion of these sentiments in those who still maintain a moral life contributes to the climate that permits the pornographer, the drug pusher, and the rapist to flourish.

Habituation is a fact of life as surely in our time as it was in Aristotle's. The difference perhaps is that only the advertisers, the media, and the promoters still recognize that fact. This gives them an enormous advantage over the naive majority, who cling piously to the belief that values are somehow self-created when, in fact, their values are the playthings of the desensitizers. For desensitization is the engine of the current moral upheaval. Thirty years ago C. S. Lewis contemplated the possibility of an "abolition of man"—an alteration of human nature that would remove man's moral nature.[13] The first step would be a deconditioning process, "the stifling of all deep-set repugnancies."[14]

Perhaps the most disconcerting aspect of this kind of desensitization is that the more effectively it is carried out, the less likely are its victims to have any awareness of what is happening. Those who have been well conditioned are usually the last to know. Such an analysis suggests that whatever lack of sophistication they may suffer from, the Moral Majority have a keener eye for the current moral climate than the representatives of Kohlberg's school of thought.

A Vision of Life

What, to return to the central theme of this paper, do stories have to do with all this? Just this: Stories of virtue, courage, and justice can and should play a central part in the formation of good habit, that is, in the formation of character. Stories provide a way of habituating children to virtue. They help to instill proper sentiments. They reinforce indirectly the more explicit moral teaching of family, church, and school. They provide also a defense against the relentless process of desensitization that goes on in modern societies. And they provide a standard against which erosion of standards can be measured.

In addition, stories expand the imagination. Moral development is not simply a matter of becoming more rational or acquiring decision-making skills. It has to do with vision, the way one looks at life. Indeed, moral evil and sin are sometimes described by theologians as an inability to see rightly. Conversely, moral improvement is often described (by very ordinary people as well as theologians) as the result of seeing things in a different light or seeing them for the first time. "I was blind but now I see" is more than a line from an old hymn; it is the way a great many people look at their moral growth. It is therefore entirely inadequate to explain morality in terms of developmental stages, as Kohlberg does. The transfor-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mation of the moral life is rarely effected without a transformation of imagination. It follows that one of the central tasks of moral education is to nourish the imagination with rich and powerful images of the kind found in stories, myths, poems, biography, and drama. If we wish our children to grow up with a deep and adequate vision of life, we must provide a rich fund for them to draw on.[15]

What's more, stories appeal to the child's normal need for identification, which is a need not for finding others just like himself (the mistake of so much contemporary children's literature) but for finding others who are better than himself—who are just like he might become if he fulfills his potential for goodness. Identification, therefore, is built on pretense, but there is such a thing as good pretense. C. S. Lewis, in writing about his own development, admits to a certain hypocrisy when in the company of an army friend, a man of deep conscience. He then says, "The distinction between pretending you are better than you are and beginning to be better in reality is finer than moral sleuthhounds conceive."[16]

Pure Hearts and Kindly Kings

Not just any stories will do, however. Though realistic stories about boys and girls just like oneself probably do no harm, they fail to enlarge the imagination in the way that heroic stories do. But we must also be clear about what we mean by a hero. Heroic stories link strength or cunning or resourcefulness with virtue. Galahad's strength is as the strength of ten because his heart is pure. Beowulf, who has the strength of thirty men in his grip, is also renowned as "the kindest of worldly kings." The cunning of Ulysses is used in the service of loyalty to his men. In the old epics the superheroes' qualities do not end with raw power. But that seems to be a current trend. Consider the popularity of *The Hulk*—a television series spun off the comic book of the same name. The Hulk, hardly human, is more like a force of nature; he appears to be, for the most part, amoral.

Moral literature need not be of epic proportions. There is also a place for stories of manners and duty, decency and virtue, loyalty and friendship on a less epic scale — stories that say, in effect: However ordinary people actually behave toward one another, this is how they ought to behave. *The Little House on the Prairie, The Wind in the Willows,* and *The Hobbit* (a combination of heroism and hominess) come to mind as examples of this type of literature. Younger children need stories that are similar but much shorter and can be told orally.

It might be a mistake to inundate a child with too many stories. But it is important that the right kind of stories be repeated over and over until they are nearly learned by heart. After all, if repetition were not such an effective technique in the education of habits, we can be certain that the advertisers would long since have ceased to employ it.

References

1. Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981), p. 114.
2. Andrew Oldenquist, " 'Indoctrination' and Societal Suicide," *The Public Interest,* Spring 1981, p. 81.
3. Ibid., p. 81.
4. Plato, *Republic,* Book III.
5. Bruce B. Suttle, "The Need for and Inevitability of Moral Indoctrination," *Educational Studies,* 12, No. 2 (Summer 1981), p. 156.
6. C. S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1947), p. 33.
7. Gilbert Meilander, *The Taste for the Other: The Social and Ethical Thought of C. S. Lewis* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1978), p. 212.
8. William K. Kilpatrick, *Psychological Seduction* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1983), chapt. 9.
9. Alasdair MacIntyre, *op. cit.,* p. 119.
10. Ibid., p. 140.
11. George Steiner, *Language and Silence* (New York: Atheneum, 1967), p. 5.
12. Oldenquist, *op. cit.,* p. 90.
13. C. S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man.*
14. C. S. Lewis, *That Hideous Strength* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1946), p. 203.
15. For a fuller discussion of "visional" ethics, see Stanley Hauerwas, *Vision and Virtue* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981), and Craig Dykstra, *Vision and Character* (New York: Paulist Press, 1981).
16. C. S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1955), pp. 192–193.

Photo credit: Library of Congress Z62-42662, an engraving by C. Cousen after H. Hardy.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PUBLIUS:
THE JOURNAL OF FEDERALISM

Published by the
Center for the Study of Federalism

Temple University
Of The Commonwealth System Of Higher Education

Daniel J. Elazar, Editor
John Kincaid, Associate Editor

PUBLIUS is a quarterly journal now in its thirteenth year of publication. Its editorial perspective reflects the orientation of the Center for the Study of Federalism which is dedicated to the study of federal principles, institutions and processes. The journal publishes articles on the theoretical and practical dimensions of American federalism and other federal systems throughout the world.

Recent special issues have dealt with topics of contemporary importance, such as decentralization, suburbanization, political community, policy choice, political culture, covenant, and state constitutions. Forthcoming special issues will concentrate on Australia, American medium-size cities, and ethnicity in comparative federal systems.

A subscription to PUBLIUS includes membership in the Conference for Federal Studies, an international organization of scholars and practitioners who share an interest in the various aspects of federalism. Members of the Conference receive its newsletter, the CFS Notebook, and other publications. Members are also invited to participate in research projects, conferences and periodic workshops.

EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD: Samuel H. Beer, Lewis A. Dexter, Ivo D. Duchacek, Max Frenkel, Irving Kristol, E. Lester Levine, William S. Livingston, Neal R. Peirce, William H. Riker, Harry N. Scheiber, Ira Sharkansky, Donald V. Smiley, David B. Walker, Murray Weidenbaum, Deil S. Wright.

Inquiries regarding subscriptions and manuscript submissions should be sent to:

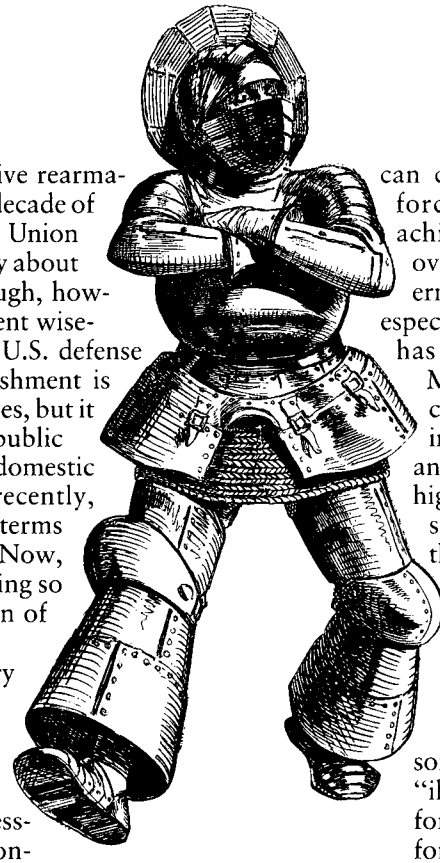
PUBLIUS
Center for the Study of Federalism
Temple University
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19122
(215) 787-1480

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Symposium on Defense

America has embarked on a massive rearmament program to make up for the lost decade of the 1970s, during which the Soviet Union outspent the United States in defense by about $400 billion. Money will not be enough, however, unless the defense dollars are spent wisely. There is little margin for error in U.S. defense planning. The Soviet military establishment is assured an ever-increasing flow of rubles, but it is feast or famine for the Pentagon as public moods fluctuate wildly in response to domestic economic developments. Until just recently, defense spending had increased in real terms for no more than three years in a row. Now, even the enthusiasm for defense spending so apparent during the election campaign of 1980 is flagging.

To have any chance at all in a military conflict with the Soviet Union, U.S. armed forces need innovative strategies, sound tactics, and cost-effective hardware. Unfortunately, it is not clear whether the military is addressing critical weaknesses with well-conceived programs.



THE "BRITISH TAR" OF THE FUTURE.

A response to Soviet nuclear superiority is one of the problem areas. The U.S.S.R. has upset the thirty-five-year-old structure of stable deterrence by putting at risk America's second-strike nuclear forces. The Reagan administration's attempt to redress the imbalance with a $180 billion program to modernize strategic nuclear forces, centered on the MX, is running into snags. First, a politically acceptable and militarily survivable basing mode for the MX has so far eluded the administration. Second, many Americans, disheartened by the administration's view of the Soviet Union as an implacable enemy bent on military superiority and the seemingly endless buildup of nuclear weapons that such a view implies, are embracing proposals for various degrees of unilateral nuclear arms restraint.

Do space-based defense systems perhaps offer a realistic hope of neutralizing the destructive power of offensive nuclear weapons?

Making nuclear missiles virtually obsolete, however, will not eliminate the Soviet military threat. The U.S.S.R., situated in the heart of the Eurasian continent, can concentrate its massive conventional forces in Europe or Southwest Asia to achieve significant numerical superiority over the United States and its allies. Western defense of the Persian Gulf would be especially difficult because the United States has no ground forces based in the area. Moreover, the Rapid Deployment Force could not be mobilized quickly enough to intervene effectively, and the price tag of an adequate airlift capability may be too high, given political constraints on defense spending. Is there a viable alternative to the RDF as it is currently structured?

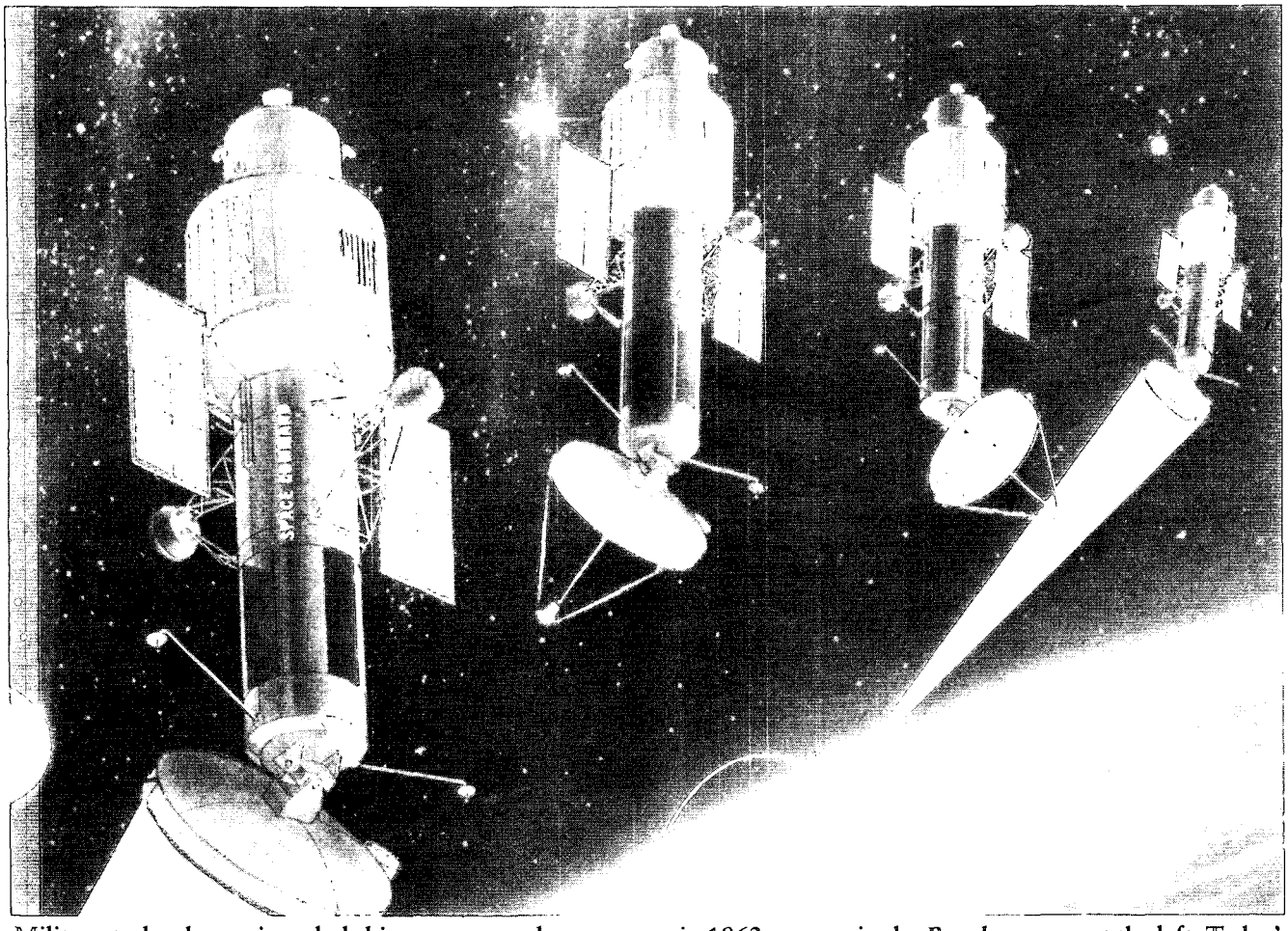
A substitute for the RDF would still have to fight numerically superior Soviet forces. NATO forces would be outnumbered as well. To compensate, the United States is deploying technologically sophisticated weapons platforms, some equipped with powerful radars to "illuminate" Soviet attackers. The Navy, for example, is spending billions of dollars for air defense systems to protect its carrier battle groups against Soviet cruise missiles. This approach, however, may be dangerously misguided. In future combat, stealth and deception may be more important for victory than tactics in the style of "damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead!"

The role of technology in U.S. weapons design is a major point of contention between "military reformers," who believe that the services are wasting money on cost-ineffective weapons too complex for the modern battlefield, and "traditionalists," who believe that high-technology weapons are essential to counter Soviet numerical advantages. Both sides, however, have so far failed to confront the major limiting factor in U.S. military planning: the All-Volunteer Force. How—within the constraints of the AVF—can the U.S. field larger forces using technologically simple weapons or maintain technologically sophisticated weapons with smaller forces?

Policy Review has invited several military experts to address those issues. Following are four innovative solutions that could help the United States field a truly robust military force within politically realistic budgets.

Robert Foelber

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Military technology—ironclad ships—prompted amusement in 1862, as seen in the *Punch* cartoon at the left. Today's technological advances prompt strong feelings but seldom amusement. Above is an artist's conception of a Lockheed space defense system that some say could be feasible by the turn of the century.

Defense from Space

When the Soviet Union achieved the ability to destroy most of the Western world's missiles, air bases, and other strategic assets by using only a small fraction of its own ballistic missiles, it put us all in a terrible situation. Henceforth, whenever we contemplate achieving any sort of political, economic, or military advantage—or frustrating any major Soviet move—we will have to realize that the Soviets, if they care enough, will be able to deny us the fruits of our labors by threatening or carrying out a disarming strategic strike. Today the Western world has no credible means of dealing with such a prospect. Some of the nuclear weapons aboard U.S., French, and British missiles and aircraft would survive a first strike. But their number would be far inferior to the Soviets' remaining arsenal. Above all, they could not attack that arsenal and succeed because they were never designed to do so. Hence, even more than before an attack, the Soviets would be capable of doing more harm unto us than we could do unto them. Clearly, as long as the Soviets maintain this capability we will be more deterred than they, and the world's affairs will come increasingly in their grasp.

To reverse this continuing shift in the world's balance of power, we will have to deal with the Soviet Union's superiority in ballistic missiles. There are only two ways we can hope to do this. First, we could try to outbuild the Soviets in the field of offensive missiles so that someday we could threaten to kill most Soviet missiles on the ground—thus, threaten to do unto the Soviets what they can now threaten to do unto us. Second, we could prepare to neutralize Soviet missiles after they were launched against us. There is no third option other than to continue our present slide into impotence. The first option, building more missiles than the Soviets, is probably not available to us because the Soviets have at least five production lines open for long-range missiles to our one. The missile race is over. The Soviets have won. However, we can reverse that victory by building systems to destroy Soviet missiles in flight. By knocking down incoming missiles, we could protect not just our strategic assets but our own lives as well.

In recent years, protection of the population has not been among the goals of our strategic planners. This has made Western countries susceptible to even faint threats

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of nuclear blackmail and has caused our military efforts to appear unrelated to what most people expect from their governments: safety. Not the least effect of a commitment to defense against Soviet ballistic missiles would be to strengthen the Western public's confidence in their governments.

A missile—or a warhead—in flight may be destroyed either by interceptor missiles or by directed energy, from the ground or from orbiting platforms. Each ground-based system must necessarily have a very limited field of view and must intercept warheads directed at its own area. Such systems are most effective as terminal defenses for individual targets. To cover all plausible targets, hundreds of interceptor missiles and their guidance radars must be spread around the country. In the late 1960s, then Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara disapproved a plan to do just that because, he said, although a network of ground-based interceptors would catch most incoming warheads, some part of a "thick" attack would get through. Moreover, any part of a ground-based network could be overwhelmed.

The only way to truly disrupt an attack is to strike at the missiles during the early part of their flight. This can only be done from space. In the early 1960s Mr. McNamara canceled a program (Project Defender, run by the Boeing Company) to place in orbit clusters of anti-missile rockets, each of which would have been launched at an attacking Soviet missile. Given the imprecision of guidance systems in those days, the interceptor rockets would have had to carry nuclear weapons. Not all would have found their targets. Some Soviet missiles would have gotten through. Mr. McNamara judged that since this defensive system would have been imperfect, we should have no defense against ballistic missiles at all, and that we should trust for our safety in the mutual vulnerability of the Soviet and the American populations.

Layers and Lasers

Today, more than ever, space is the environment in which defense against ballistic missiles may best be accomplished. As they enter space, missiles are relatively slow. Given the distinctive infrared characteristics of their exhaust, they cannot be mistaken for anything else. Moreover, these missiles—especially the Soviet Union's liquid-fueled models—are physically flimsy and can be destroyed by relatively small amounts of energy. Furthermore, the warheads from missiles destroyed during the boost phase would drop back onto the region from which they came. In recent years technology has made possible the building of laser weapons, which can take full advantage of these conditions. Unlike interceptor missiles, lasers deliver their energy at the speed of light through the vacuum of space. But no conceivable laser weapon could ever guarantee that not a single Soviet missile would ever get to dispense its warheads. That is why space-based defenses must always be combined with ground-based terminal defenses. We must never lose sight of the fact that protection of the country can result only from the cumulative effect of a number of systems arrayed in mutually supporting layers.

This said, however, we must note that the technology of space-based lasers provides us with the chance to build a first defensive layer that is far more effective than any previously possible. If we took full advantage of present technology, the U.S. could place into orbit several dozen high-energy lasers by the early 1990s. These lasers would be powered by liquid hydrogen and fluorine. At altitudes of about 1,000 miles in nearly polar orbits, they would have fields of view of about 5,000 miles. About one third of the number in orbit would be in view of the Soviet ICBM fields at any given time. The rest would be in position to strike Soviet submarine-launched missiles as well as long-range bombers. Each could deposit enough energy on a missile to kill it within a few seconds or less.

The precise effect of a space-based laser defense would depend on the power of the laser itself, the quality of the beam that was generated, the accuracy and steadiness of the beam, the speed with which it could be retargeted, and the number of laser stations. In addition, of course, the system's effectiveness would depend on the precise resistance of Soviet missiles to laser light and on the manner in which the Soviets chose to launch their missiles.

It would only be logical to use this century's technology against this century's threat while working on ever-better space defenses . . .

Today the TRW Company is building cylindrical hydrogen fluoride lasers for use in space. If the cylinder is built according to some proposed designs, it will put out more than 10,000,000 watts of laser light. The Lockheed Corporation is building a device to point out and hold a laser beam on a moving target the size of a missile 3,000 miles away. The Eastman Kodak Company and other leaders in the optical field are building machinery and processes to produce sections for the large (ten-meter) laser beam reflectors. A variety of other aerospace companies—for example, Martin Marietta, Boeing, and Sperry Rand—are developing parts to insulate the beam director from the laser and to process the enormous amounts of electronic data needed to make each station function as part of an overall system. Since 1981, as a result of action by the Senate, the Air Force has been doing a few of the many things required to integrate all this technology into actual laser weapons.

The principal technical argument raised by those who do not wish to build space laser defenses—or wish to slow their development—is that although the weapons we could build with the above-mentioned technology could easily destroy any missile that we or the Soviets have built or are building, they could not destroy hypothetical missiles built of laser-resistant materials. Such materials, however, either do not exist or are inappropriate for building missiles. At any rate, *this* generation of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Americans is threatened by *this* generation of Soviet missiles and will continue to be until some defensive systems are put in place. It would only be logical to use this century's technology against this century's threat while working on ever-better space defenses for the future.

In fact, however, the arguments regarding whether this country should integrate current technology into a space laser weapon have nothing to do with technology. The basic technological points are conceded by all: The laser power, the pointing accuracy, and the beam control that are necessary to deliver a lethal dose of light on Soviet missiles are available. Most of the arguments are managerial. Is the Air Force willing to risk reductions in other programs? Are the various parts of the bureaucratic-industrial complex willing to consider realigning their roles and missions? The fundamental argument, however, is strategic: Do the American people want their leaders to ensure their safety through defensive weapons or through a combination of American vulnerability and threats of nuclear retaliation upon the Russian people?

Today, when the Soviet Union contemplates a strategic strike against us, it faces a straightforward problem: Missiles of a certain power, accuracy, and reliability can be counted on statistically to take out a certain percentage of targets. The deployment of even a few space-based laser defensive weapons would complicate matters. A single ten-megawatt laser station with a ten-meter mirror passing over the Soviet Union while it was launching a missile attack could destroy, on the average, one missile every four seconds. A deployment in orbit of only four could place one station in such a position at all times. During the approximately 500 seconds between the beginning of a Soviet counterforce attack and the time the last missile finished its boost phase, that single laser could theoretically destroy some 125 missiles. The Soviets could not know which missiles would be destroyed and, therefore, which targets they would be unable to hit. Thus, with only a small deployment of space laser defenses the Soviets' confidence in the success of an attack could be much diminished.

Inhibiting Fears

Consider, then, the effect of some two dozen lasers in orbit. The eight stations that would be in view of the Soviet ICBM fields at any given time could destroy some 1,000 missiles—more than would be launched in a counterforce strike—during the attacking missiles' boost phase. The Soviet force of submarine-launched missiles would be a much easier target for the lasers. Because such missiles must be launched one after the other, few would be entering space at any given time. The Soviet long-range bomber force would have to choose between trying to fly intercontinental distances below the clouds—which it could not do in large numbers—and exposing itself to total destruction by the lasers.

A large number of space-based laser weapons would not solve all the problems caused by a generation of neglect of our military forces. For example, lasers could not help us against low-flying cruise missiles launched from a variety of aircraft. Lasers could not keep our ground forces in Europe from being overrun. But they could allow us to deal with those situations without the inhibiting fear of a decisive Soviet attack on our strategic forces. Because they would attack Soviet missiles after launch, however, space laser weapons would also destroy any intermediate-range missiles sent against our allies in Europe and the Far East.

Defensive weapons are important for political as well as for military reasons. People are not likely to see much good in military preparedness if they believe that the use of military force is likely to mean death for them and their loved ones. Pledges of assistance to allies become hollow when fulfilling them would entail the destruction of one's own country. Deterrence of others becomes self-deterrence when the enemy can do more to us than we can do to him. The space-based laser weapons we can build now are by no means "ultimate weapons." They are not a total defense against every possible threat. But to refuse to provide ourselves with the highest level of protection that we can manage is to tell others, and above all ourselves, that we really don't care very much what happens to us.

Angelo Codevilla

Effective Intervention in Southwest Asia

The Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force, formed in the wake of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979, is a politically and militarily unsuitable instrument for effective U.S. military intervention in southwest Asia and elsewhere in the Third World. Its size, structure, location, and concept of operations are incompatible with the political, logistical, and operational requirements of armed U.S. intervention outside Europe and northeast Asia. Unless fundamentally altered, the task force, whose present character has been shaped more by interservice rivalry than by realistic military considerations, should be disbanded. The sole change so far, however, has been in name: In January the task force was rechristened the U.S. Central Command. Even that has not worked, since most observers still refer to it as the Rapid Deployment Force, or RDF.

Two distinctive conditions govern any attempt to mount a credible U.S. intervention force in southwest Asia: distance and the lack of politically secure military access ashore in peacetime. Let us consider distance first.

No area of the world is more distant from the United States than the Persian Gulf. Air distances from the U.S. East Coast to the Gulf exceed 7,000 nautical miles; by sea, over which most of the present RDF would be compelled to move, distances range from 8,500 nautical miles via the Suez Canal to 12,000 nautical miles via the Cape of Good Hope.

The logistical significance of these distances is a function of three factors. First, most of the military units currently earmarked for the RDF, including ten Air Force

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tactical fighter wings and five Army and two Marine Corps divisions, are stationed in the United States, requiring an enormous investment in means of moving them quickly to the Gulf area. Second, the United States possesses virtually no military bases in the southwest Asian region, imposing unusually demanding requirements for provisioning the RDF once it is deployed to the Gulf. Third, Soviet and other potentially hostile forces immediately available for combat in the region are larger and much closer to the Gulf, condemning at least early-arriving RDF forces to an almost certain and pronounced numerical inferiority.

Immobility

The adverse operational consequences of the Gulf's logistical remoteness would be exacerbated in contingencies requiring commitment of substantial U.S. ground forces ashore. Surface naval and amphibious forces can be maintained on station indefinitely in the region. Land-based tactical air forces can be moved quickly from the United States to the Gulf if, of course, provided access to air installations en route and in the Gulf itself. Sizable ground forces, however, especially heavy Army formations, cannot be moved quickly by air or by sea.[1]

Current Defense Department programs to enhance the RDF's strategic mobility,[2] desirable though they are, will not eliminate the problem of moving the RDF rapidly overseas. Nor do the mobility enhancement programs offer a solution to the threat of preemption by, for example, Soviet airborne forces (or other hostile forces close to the point of dispute), whose strategic mobility is calculable in hours and days rather than weeks or months.

The deterrent value of a preemptive deployment of Soviet airborne forces in a U.S.-Soviet confrontation in the Gulf should not be underestimated. Indeed, it has been persuasively argued that success in such a confrontation would crown not the side that arrived in larger force but the side that simply got there first with any measurable force.

> The United States does not have ground forces stationed on the territory that would be threatened, and geography favors the Soviets in a countdown toward competitive intervention. *The Middle East is an area in which preemption is the only reasonable strategy for either of the superpowers;* preemption not in terms of strikes against each other's forces, but in terms of reaching the scene first. Once one of the superpowers' troops are on the disputed ground, counterintervention becomes a much more reckless venture for the other, because he then has the "last clear chance" to avoid the dangers inherent in undertaking the unprecedented action of combat between two nuclear-armed states. The danger of surprise here, for the United States, is not so much the edge it can give as a force multiplier in determining the outcome of battle; rather it is the danger that by being slow on the draw, Washington may be deterred from any direct engagement at all.[3]

It should go without saying that a strategy of preemption is ill served by an intervention force based largely in distant North America, which lacks the strategic position necessary to ensure timely arrival in the Gulf of more than token ground forces. Nor is such a strategy served by the RDF's current concept of operations, which focuses heavily on a worst-case scenario involving a massive albeit leisurely Soviet invasion of Iran preceded by warning time ample enough to permit deployment to the Gulf of the bulk of U.S. Army forces assigned to the RDF.[4] A full-blooded Soviet invasion of Iran, however unlikely to occur and impossible to defeat, was contrived as the basis of RDF planning to justify an intervention force large enough to be dominated by the Army, a domination that is already apparent.[5]

Compounding the penalties imposed by distance and interservice rivalry is the second problem—the lack of politically secure military access ashore in southwest Asia in peacetime. Southwest Asia is not Europe or northeast Asia, where the United States maintains

The inherent mobility and security of ships . . . provide greater military flexibility in a crisis and greater security against terrorist . . . attacks.

powerful forces ashore amidst reliable and militarily competent allies.

The projection of U.S. military power into logistically remote areas overseas has always required a network of secure refueling, resupply, and maintenance facilities on the fringes of the disputed region—a logistical network that without exception has been based on land.[6] No such infrastructure exists today in southwest Asia. Except for the tiny atoll of Diego Garcia, some 2,500 miles from the Strait of Hormuz, the United States possesses no military bases in that vast area of the world stretching from Turkey to the Philippines. Nor are prospects favorable for establishing a major facility in the region. The countries in the area most emphatically do not want formal security arrangements with the United States.

The political sensitivity of potential host nations to a permanent U.S. military presence on their soil is understandable. Such a presence would validate the criticisms of radical Arabs about how the conservative Gulf states are toadies of the imperialists, thus undermining the internal legitimacy of the very regimes the United States seeks to protect. A U.S. force presence ashore is probably undesirable in any event, since it could attract radical terror and guerrilla attacks (lest it be forgotten, the first U.S. ground combat units deployed to Vietnam were sent there not to defend the South Vietnamese but to defend U.S. installations in that country).

To be sure, the Defense Department has not been insensitive to the political barriers to establishing a permanent military presence ashore in the Gulf region, and it has sought with some success to gain contingent rights of access to selected facilities in Kenya, Somalia, Oman, and Egypt. Yet simply having the promise of access to facili-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ties on a contingency basis is no substitute for U.S.-controlled and U.S.-operated bases whose use is not subject to momentary political calculations of host governments in a crisis. The same internal political considerations that deny the United States a permanent military presence ashore in the region could well be invoked to deny the United States access to facilities in the event of crisis. During the October War of 1973 the United States was denied overflight rights by NATO allies, countries usually regarded as more reliable than nontreaty U.S. "friends" in the Gulf.

Agility Afloat

The problems of distance and access, as well as the strong case for adopting a strategy of preemption, ought to have propelled the Pentagon toward creation of an intervention force quite different from the present RDF. Instead of a large, distant, logistically ponderous, Vietnam-style intervention force dependent on friendly invitation to go ashore and stay there, logic and common sense would seem to dictate a small, agile, tactically capable force that is based at sea, supplied from the sea, and supported by expanded sea power, especially carrier aviation and forcible-entry capabilities. Such a force would stress quality, not size; on-station presence and immediate responsiveness, not tardy arrivals from the United States; and logistical self-sufficiency, not dependence on facilities ashore.[7]

The lack of any real prospect for establishing an operationally significant peacetime U.S. military presence ashore in southwest Asia (to say nothing of its questionable desirability) compels a primary reliance on sea power, especially the kind of sea-based capability to project power ashore long embodied in the Navy–Fleet Marine Force team. The refusal of potential host nations to permit the United States to position military materiel on their territory also argues strongly for expanding current plans to position materiel aboard specialized ships to be maintained in the Indian Ocean. The inherent mobility and security of ships at sea additionally provide greater military flexibility in a crisis and greater security against terrorist and guerrilla attacks.

A sea-based RDF admittedly would have limited utility in contingencies demanding sustained inland combat in and beyond the reach of amphibious assault forces and carrier-based air power. Prosecution of sustained inland combat, however, would be contingent upon securing coastal lodgments, which can be gained only by the ability to land our forces. Moreover, unlike forces held in the United States for rapid deployment to southwest Asia, a sea-based RDF could be maintained on the spot, providing a level of deterrence and a capacity for preemptive insertion unattainable by forces stationed in the United States.

Jeffrey Record

1. A minimum of fifty days would be required to move a complete U.S. Army mechanized division and its support units to the Gulf by air, even utilizing the full resources of the U.S. Military Airlift Command; some twenty-one days would be needed to deploy even the 82nd Airborne Division, the Army's smallest. Sealift, the only real means of moving large ground forces, also would entail substantial time in transit, especially if compelled to enter the Indian Ocean via the Cape of Good Hope. Even U.S. Marine Corps amphibious forces already deployed in the Western Pacific would need twelve to fourteen days after embarkation to reach objectives inside the Persian Gulf.
2. The programs include (1) procurement of additional C-5 strategic transport aircraft, (2) procurement of fast-deployment logistics ships, and (3) construction and deployment to the Gulf of a fleet of specialized vessels aboard which would be stored the equipment and thirty days' worth of ammunition, fuel, etc., for an entire Marine Corps division.
3. Richard K. Betts, *Surprise Attack, Lessons for Defense Planning* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1982), p. 262.
4. For a discussion of the Iranian scenario and the interservice rivalry that has plagued RDF planning from its inception, see James R. Schlesinger, "Rapid (?) Deployment (?) Force (?)," *Washington Post,* Sept. 24, 1980; John J. Fialka, "Panel to Probe Pentagon Infighting on Proposed RDF," *Washington Star,* Mar. 3, 1981; and the author's "The Rapid Deployment Force: Is the Pentagon Kidding?" *Washington Quarterly,* Summer 1981.
5. An Army officer now commands the RDF, and only Army units have been placed under the peacetime operational control of the RDF.
6. The Normandy invasion of 1944 would have been impossible without military access to Great Britain; in the Pacific theater, Australia formed the logistical bedrock for MacArthur's reconquest of the Solomons, New Guinea, and the Philippines. Similarly, U.S. military operations in the Korean peninsula depended on access to Japan; and in Vietnam the United States enjoyed not only a network of installations ashore but also facilities in the Philippines and Thailand.
7. For a discussion of an effective sea-based logistics system, see the author's *The Rapid Deployment Force and U.S. Military Intervention in the Persian Gulf* (Washington, D.C.: Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, 1981).

Naval Forces for the Future—Quo Vadimus?

The United States needs a strong and effective Navy. We are, strategically speaking, an island nation dependent upon waterborne transportation to sustain our economy and to support our military operations in time of war. This principle is widely recognized, and a key objective of the Reagan administration has been a buildup of U.S. naval forces. Some observers, however, question whether we are going about this buildup in the right way. It is quite possible that after spending hundreds of billions of dollars we will have a Navy ill-suited to the tasks it is most likely to face.

Naval force planning today is premised on a forward offensive strategy that would have the Navy move aggressively into enemy waters early in a war to strike enemy naval forces and their supporting base structure. The instrument of these strikes would be the battle

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

group, consisting of one or more aircraft carriers and their supporting escorts. The battle groups, employing costly "battle-group-capable" ships, would thus establish naval superiority and create a more benign environment at sea in which less capable (and less costly) warships could operate effectively. The Navy believes that the very existence of such offensive forces would force the Soviet Union into a defensive, reactive position, allowing the United States to capitalize on Soviet geographic advantages and compelling the Soviets to concentrate their naval forces close to home, where they would pose less of a threat to U.S. sea lines of communication.[1]

The battle group, therefore, is the key structural element in naval force planning. A basic battle group is an aircraft carrier, its embarked air wing, and about six escorting cruisers and destroyers. In actual combat in high-threat areas, a battle group would probably have two or more aircraft carriers to provide mutual support and protection, thus greatly enhancing the prospects for success. The ratio of escorting ships to aircraft carriers in such an enlarged battle group would remain about six to one.

The battle group is a formidable aggregation of tactical power and would therefore be a prime target for the enemy, especially if it is approaching his shores. The current concept for defending the battle group is a defense in depth, or a layered defense. Escorts and defending aircraft would be arrayed in multiple rings around the carriers. Attacking aircraft and cruise missiles are first engaged by defending fighters (normally F-14s) in the outer air battle. Surviving attackers are then engaged by cruisers and destroyers (ideally equipped with the sophisticated AEGIS anti-air-warfare defense system) in the inner screening forces. Last-ditch protection would come from point defense systems, such as the Sea Sparrow missile system and Phalanx, a radar-directed Gatling gun. Attacking enemy submarines would have to penetrate an outer screen manned by ASW destroyers, supporting nuclear submarines, and carrier-based ASW aircraft. An inner screen of destroyers, equipped with powerful active ("pinging") sonars, would attempt to intercept any surviving enemy submarines trying to close with the carriers. Thus, the battle group would hope to protect itself through withering attrition against any attacking forces.

Tempting Targets

This concept of operations, though it seems sensible at first, poses serious risks: in the strategy of forward offensive operations early in the war, in the tactics assumed for protecting the battle group, and perhaps most important, in the force structure toward which this planning scenario drives us.

The forward offensive strategy would require some extraordinarily hazardous operations. In a recent article Admiral Stansfield Turner and Captain George Thibault pointed out some of these hazards and concluded that thoughtful military planners were unlikely to actually undertake such operations.[2] Given modern surveillance techniques and current battle group operating procedures, a battle group approaching Soviet waters would be detected long before it arrived within striking distance of Soviet bases. Admiral Turner and Captain Thibault calculate that a battle group would be exposed to intensive attack by missile-launching bombers, surface warships, and submarines for at least two full days before reaching its attack range. Even assuming the battle group survives and attacks are launched, the Soviets would have had ample time to disperse their forces away from the U.S. attack. No president, Admiral Turner and Captain Thibault conclude, could possibly permit the Navy to undertake such a high-risk effort with so little prospect for positive results.

Even if one assumes that the battle group's defenses can be made nearly airtight against conventional attack (an assumption that is by no means justified at this time), one must still consider the threat of nuclear weapons. A concentrated battle group is probably the world's most tempting target for a tactical nuclear weapon. Not only would tactical nuclear weapons offer a high probability of success in destroying or disabling a battle group, but the use of nuclear weapons at sea would also involve relatively little danger of unintended collateral damage. Thus, the approach of a battle group into Soviet waters in the early stages of a superpower military confrontation could result in the sudden destruction of major naval forces and could be the stimulus for initiating an exchange of nuclear weapons.

. . . in the current environment, where studies must seem to justify every decision, analytical tractability may be more important . . .

In addition to Admiral Turner, another distinguished naval officer, Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, a former chief of naval operations, sees the battle group concept as being increasingly invalid.[3] He believes the battle group concept results in the offensive power of the Navy being overly concentrated in a few ships, necessitating the expenditure of additional billions of dollars in highly complex, defensive missile systems to protect them. Insufficient effort is made, Admiral Zumwalt believes, to disperse and diversify the Navy's strike capability through newer concepts based on long-range cruise missiles, vertical and short takeoff and landing (V/STOL) aircraft, space surveillance, and new hull types resulting from modern technology. Admiral Zumwalt is disappointed that the Reagan administration has elected to go for more of the same when, he believes, new directions are needed.

Both Admiral Turner and Admiral Zumwalt believe that modern naval strategy and force structure should be based on a concept of "distributed force"—that is, forces should be distributed in capability such that offensive power is not overconcentrated in a few ships, and naval

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

forces should be distributed geographically in such a way that success does not depend on one large tactical unit, such as a battle group. Tactically, units should be distributed to confuse the enemy's targeting and to prevent him from massing his attacking force against one all-important target.

This brings us to the matter of tactics for battle group defense. The current concept is for an active defense where the carriers (and other defended ships) are surrounded by several layers of defending forces, all using active radar and sonar emissions to detect and defend against incoming missiles, aircraft, and submarines. It is a classic example of brute-force attrition: The attackers try to overwhelm and penetrate the defense while the defense tries to devastate the attacking forces. It is also a situation that is relatively tractable for mathematical analysis, and it can therefore serve as a basis for a seemingly orderly and rational process for deriving requirements. And in the current Washington environment, where studies must seem to justify every decision, analytical tractability may be more important for assumed tactics than the prospect for success.

The enemy surveillance would be further garbled by the almost inevitable incidental shipping traffic and . . . randomly seeded decoys.

The problem with the active layered-defense tactic is that it creates a very difficult problem for the defense. It is possible for the attacking forces, especially when armed with cruise missiles, to mount a coordinated mass attack that can overwhelm even very capable defensive weapons. Analysis shows this very clearly, and the Navy must develop complex, sophisticated, and expensive weapons to attempt to deal with this demanding threat. A prime example is the AEGIS air defense system, which, however capable it may prove to be, results in a destroyer costing over $1 billion per ship.[4]

Changing Tactics

Many believe that the highly complex weapons necessitated by such demanding requirements will let us down in the end because of inherent unreliability. In addition, the cost of such sophisticated weapons is so high that we will never be able to procure enough of them. In this view simpler, less costly weapons, though not as effective in analytical studies, may ultimately prove more effective in actual combat because of better reliability and because they would be available in larger numbers. Others believe that only high-capability ships will survive and be useful in the future.

In naval warfare we may be able to reconcile simpler, less costly ships and weapons with better fleet effectiveness by changing tactics. Over the past fifteen years some innovative admirals, including Thomas D. Davies, Norman Gillette, Carl Siberlich, E. P. Aurand, and Barney Rapp, have experimented with more imaginative tactics that emphasized deception, stealth, and dispersion. Such tactics continue to be used occasionally in fleet exercises but have had no apparent impact on naval force planning.

The current massed battle group concept assumes the enemy knows the exact location of our forces, and the liberal use of powerful electromagnetic and acoustic emitters coupled with regular formation patterns ensures that this assumption would be correct. Suppose, instead, we follow the advice of Admirals Davies et al. and adopt an irregular distributed formation. This could, perhaps, be based on an interlocking grid of mutually supporting stations designed to confuse overhead radar surveillance by a seemingly random dispersal pattern. The enemy surveillance would be further garbled by the almost inevitable incidental shipping traffic and, if necessary, by randomly seeded decoys.

The idea here, of course, is to confuse the enemy as to the actual location of our ships, particularly the high-value ships, so that he will be forced to make diluted and uncoordinated attacks that even ships of modest capability can defend against.

To do this most successfully will require that our ships habitually operate under electromagnetic and acoustic silence, not using the powerful active sensors that are so much a part of the expensive combat systems of current ships. Surveillance sensors would be mounted on airplanes—which are much better surveillance platforms—with contact information being data-linked down to the electronically silent warships. Using target data derived from aircraft, from satellite data links, and from their own passive sensors,[5] U.S. ships would go active to engage enemy units only when they were actually within range and, having destroyed the target, would resume their covert posture.

Tactically Untenable

The key is to gain a tactical information advantage over the enemy—to know where he is before he knows where we are. If we can do this, we can attack him on terms advantageous to us. If we can't, then he will attack on terms advantageous to himself. With the massed battle group, the situation will almost always be the latter. He will stand off and launch cruise missiles until our defenses begin to crumble. We will be shooting at his bullets while he is shooting at our ships. That is a tactically untenable situation. We must distribute our forces, confuse his surveillance and targeting, and engage his divided attacking force through skillful use of the tactical information advantage we have forced him to concede.

This, however, requires a force structure—ships and weapons—substantially different from that currently planned for the 600-ship Navy. A distributed force concept, in which ships would normally operate under electromagnetic and acoustic silence, would require much less emphasis on powerful active systems, such as AEGIS and the high-power SQS-53 sonar, and instead, more emphasis on passive systems, airborne surveillance (in-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cluding V/STOL), and command, control, and communications (C3) systems suitable to distributed force operations.

This has profound implications for the structure and ultimate affordability of our future naval forces. Analysis of the Navy's shipbuilding plans shows that building the Navy up to current goals (both number and type of ships) would require ten years of shipbuilding budgets averaging more than $21 billion (in fiscal year 1983 dollars). This is considerably more than the average shipbuilding budget (in fiscal year 1983 dollars) of $7.2 billion in the Carter administration and $6.8 billion in the Nixon and Ford administrations and $12.8 billion in the first two years of the Reagan administration. More than half of the required $21-plus billion would be required for AEGIS-equipped surface combatants.[6] Surface combatants built for a distributed-force concept should be substantially less expensive than those currently planned. Thus a change of emphasis in surface combatant programs alone could make it much more likely that the Navy will be able to reach its goals with the funds available under current budget limitations.

The rationale for shifting to a distributed force concept, however, is not to save money. It is, rather, to build a Navy that can win in the current and future naval combat environment. To win in future naval conflicts, the Navy needs to move now to change the fundamental strategic and tactical assumptions that govern planning and the design of future ships and weapons systems. We need to structure our forces so that they will fight from an advantageous posture and with a tactical information advantage. Our ships must not be the bullseye in a vast maritime shooting gallery.

Peter T. Tarpgaard

1. Testimony of Admiral Thomas B. Hayward, USN, Chief of Naval Operations, in *Military Posture and H.R. 6459*, hearings before the Subcommittee on Seapower and Strategic and Critical Materials, House Committee on Armed Services, 96:2 (Feb. and Mar. 1980), Part 3, p. 361.
2. Stansfield Turner and George Thibault, "Preparing for the Unexpected: The Need for New Military Strategy" in *Foreign Affairs*, Fall 1982, pp. 122–135. Admiral Stansfield Turner was Commander in Chief, Allied Forces Southern Europe, and President of the Naval War College. He served as Director of Central Intelligence from 1977 to 1981. Captain George Thibault, USN, is Chairman of the Department of Military Strategy at the National War College.
3. Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, USN (Retired), "Naval Battles We Could Lose" in *International Security Review*, Summer 1981, pp. 139–156.
4. The first class of AEGIS destroyers, the DDG-47 class, was redesignated as a cruiser class (CG-47), a designation perhaps more in keeping with its price.
5. The enemy searching for the silent and distributed fleet would be forced to go active or rely upon eyeballs alone to find his targets.
6. See Congressional Budget Office, *Building a 600-Ship Navy: Costs, Timing, and Alternative Approaches*, March 1982. Though more than 50 percent of the budget would go for surface combatants, aircraft carriers account for only 10 percent (even assuming one every other year).

Military Technology: The Complexity Issue

For several years a spirited debate has escalated in the media, the Pentagon and the Congress, often pitting members of the same political persuasion squarely against one another. The debate is spurred by the so-called military reform movement. The heart of the reformers' thesis is that increasing sophistication of military equipment is synonymous with more complexity and so represents higher costs and increasing maintenance requirements. This results in fewer fighting machines and less military capability overall. They advocate larger numbers of simpler systems and fewer numbers of complex systems. The crux of this argument is often referred to as "quantity versus quality" or "simple versus complex," with technology portrayed as the villain. How valid are these arguments?

It is certainly true that one of the keys to American military strategy for years has been to build fewer but technologically superior weapons to overcome the numerically superior forces of the Warsaw Pact. By reliance on ever-increasing sophistication of equipment and state-of-the-art technologies, spectacular results in warfighting capability have been achieved.

In some cases this technologically advanced equipment has operational and maintenance complexity. But the advancement in capability is spectacular. A comparison between the F-16 of today and the P-51 of World War II is illuminating. The P-51 could only manage a maximum of about one sortie every other day. Today's F-16 can fly up to three sorties per day. Thus, the F-16 is about six times more capable in sortie rates than the P-51. Furthermore, the range and payload of the F-16 take it far beyond the P-51 class.

This lightweight fighter is actually more comparable with the heavy strategic bomber of World War II, the B-17. The B-17 had a payload of 4,000 to 6,000 pounds; the F-16 carries 4,000 to 12,000 pounds. Ten men were needed to man the B-17; the F-16 has a crew of one. And its cruising speed is 400 miles per hour faster. Yet the F-16 costs only about 1.6 times the B-17 of the 1940s[1]—not bad considering that the price of an Oldsmobile station wagon or a sirloin steak has increased that much just since 1967. And a comparison of an actual combat scenario puts that capability difference in perspective. If the F-16 had been available for the World War II raids on the Schweinfurt ball bearing factories, only six F-16s (and six crew members) would have been needed in place of 291 B-17s (and 2,910 crew members).

Lessons of History

The Air Force prides itself on being at the leading edge of technology. But in these days of sophisticated electronic warfare, command, and control systems, guided munitions, and laser gunsights, the technological capabilities of our sister services are being upgraded in manners undreamed of by those who participated in World

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

War II. Secretary of the Navy John Lehman emphasizes that over the past twenty years, the Navy has reduced ship crew size by easing the need for maintenance. A typical example is the new AEGIS cruiser, which carries highly sophisticated long-range weapons with "high-kill" probability. An AEGIS cruiser is crewed by only 326 people—down from 1,626 on the cruisers that they replace.

So, too, with the Army. A World War II Army battalion in a defensive position controlled some 400 acres (two and a half times the area held by a World War I battalion). By 1980, in Germany, an American battalion controlled as much as 18,000 acres—forty to fifty times the territory of World War II. This dramatic advance results from firepower improvements and technological progress in mobility, sensors, and communications.

This increased sophistication of military weapons secures an advantage in battle—a lesson history teaches. The Mameluk Dynasty of Egypt (1250–1517), which refused to adopt the technological advantage of guns, was crushed by the Ottoman Turks, who used guns. If an opponent has a technologically superior weapon in sufficient quantity to inflict credible damage on another's forces, he will win the conflict. Had Hitler allowed production of the ME 262, the first operational World War II jet fighter, in the quantity desired by his generals, you might be reading this article in a German language edition today. There really are absolutes in national defense. We are discussing the difference between deterring or winning a war and losing it, not the difference between driving a Chevrolet and a Rolls-Royce.

We are discussing the difference between deterring or winning a war and losing it, not the difference between driving a Chevrolet and a Rolls Royce.

Offset Strategies

Effectiveness counts. Using an earlier illustration, the B-17s dropped 1,122 bombs on the ball bearing factory in two raids. Only 13 percent hit the target. Thirty-three F-16 sorties could deliver the same payload as the 291 B-17 sorties. We can further reduce the F-16 sorties to six because of a conservative 75 percent bomb accuracy rate. No commander would turn back the clock and send 2,910 men on a dangerous mission when he could send six with a significantly greater chance of survival. The issue is not simple versus complex, but what is needed to win and survive—to defeat an enemy in combat.

If technology can be used to offset a numerically superior force, we must exploit that option. An offset strategy does not require one side to increase its number of the same kind of weapon. Rather, it can offset the other's numerical advantage by using a weapon that is more effective against the first. The Air Force developed the AIM 9-L missile to make our fighters extremely effective against numerically superior forces. Increasing the kill ratio of the basic aircraft by adding the AIM 9-L makes an already advanced fighter even more effective.

Some analysts say that weapons are too complex for our people to use and therefore are no longer effective. Now, what is technologically complex? The wristwatch calculator is a complex instrument that performs many functions. Most of us don't know how it works, but we know how to work it. As complex as the microcircuits may be, we aren't intimidated by them, and they are not necessarily complicated to operate. Likewise, technological advancement in weaponry does not necessarily mean increased complexity from the user's viewpoint.

World War II bomb sights, for example, were cumbersome and complex—and only marginally effective. They required the total concentration of one person. Today, the pilot of a single-seat, high-performance aircraft can strike his target at the speed of sound with a 75 percent accuracy rate. Everything is handled by the mere flip of a switch. Technology, properly applied, provides a simpler, more reliable system.

Another example: The radar of the Navy F-18 has 8,000 fewer parts than the older F-4J, and its engine has 7,700 fewer parts, as reliability has been increased. The overall mean time between failure of the F-4 was 0.69 hours; that of the F-18 is 2 hours, and it can be improved still more.

Such technological improvements are important because we are faced with two major manpower challenges: (1) competition with civilian industry for the technically skilled and experienced service member and (2) demographics.

Industry in the United States today is moving toward a new mix of "high-tech" information-processing applications and "low-tech" service-oriented jobs, displacing the semiskilled manufacturing worker from heavy industry. Both the baby boom and the displacement of workers have provided a large supply of employees for the service industry, depressing wages and incentives to improve productivity there. However, that will change over the 1980s as fewer workers enter the job market and skilled workers retire.

In this context Air Force Secretary Verne Orr has outlined development of conflicting trends.[2] Not only will about 20 percent fewer young people be entering the work force, academia and the military by the early 1990s, but these young people may have less scientific and technical background—despite the increasing technical requirements of both the military services and the private sector.

Train and Retain

A recent study by the General Aviation Manufacturers Association forecasts a potential shortage of aircraft mechanics by 1990. In fact, the GAMA study found that aircraft mechanics possess marketable skills in fields as varied as dental equipment repair and continuous-mining machinery repair. Shortages of avionics technicians are already evident. The need for skilled workers will become more acute: It is projected that by 1985 about

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

6,000,000 computers will be in use in the United States, compared with 225,000 in 1975; the Robot Institute of America projects a twelve-fold increase in industrial robots by 1990; telecommunications hardware sales may quadruple by 1990.

But as the GAMA study forcefully emphasizes, shortages of technically trained people may be a prime limit on achieving forecast growth in these high-tech systems if adequate retraining programs are not implemented for displaced workers. Given current trends, the concern of the services has to be retaining our trained, skilled, and experienced people as industry enters high-tech fields and bids for trained personnel.

Although the services operate the largest technical training program in the free world, adequate numbers of these trained people must remain in the military—not only for the obvious overriding necessity of readiness, but also to amortize the nation's expensive investment in their training.

The combination of demographic trends and the increased amounts of technical training needed to produce a qualified technician will continue to put pressure on a system already in close balance.

Next, numbers. More weapons means more manpower and associated support—known as "life-cycle" factors. If we tried to match the Soviets numerically, we would require more pilots, repairers, and suppliers, more bases overseas, more refueling aircraft, more training bases in the United States, more people to man these new installations—and all this just when the number of young people is declining. The dollars saved on our simpler weapons—and more—would be expended in associated higher life-cycle costs. The Soviets would continue to make technological advances to their systems, eventually making them more capable than ours.

Hidden Costs

So, in addition to the up-front dollars for research, development, and production of a new weapons system, life-cycle costs could exceed 85 percent of its total cost. Life-cycle costs are hidden in replacement parts; in the life expectancy of the equipment; in the hangars, runways, barracks, and other basing costs; and—more than any of these—in recruiting, training, sustaining, and retiring large numbers of the necessary experienced, skilled people in our modern military establishment. Those personnel costs are considerable. Several generations of people have had to be trained to fly and maintain the same B-52 since the 1950s, and those training costs will continue as long as that one plane is used. We know those costs are there, but it is difficult to define them during the initial procurement stage. The services are grappling with methodologies to do a better job.

Methods now being developed would price all items associated with a military systems purchase. Efforts are under way to ensure that funding for training equipment and simulators is part of the initial cost estimate and that the many personnel needs are identified. Additionally, contractors are being enticed to be more productive in this area through incentives for reduced manpower and training overhead. Industry is responding by using technology to reduce the maintenance complexity of many of our weapons and their components.

Although we have dramatically increased the capability of our weapons systems, we have not yet reduced the associated manpower support "tail" significantly. Each F-4 of 1950s vintage requires approximately twenty-seven maintenance technicians. The F-15, which has been in the Air Force inventory for ten years, requires about twenty-six people. Our future efforts must concentrate not only on providing increased capability to cope with growing Soviet technological sophistication, but also on reducing the support "tail." Future plans to fight from dispersed positions, coupled with demographic realities, demand no less. In the past we have designed systems without taking into account the people who would operate and maintain them. In the future we must design weapons with personnel requirements in mind,

If through technology we can reduce the number of combatants and support people in a war zone, we have no choice but to do so.

rather than commit the folly of ignoring the lessons of modern combat and the obvious advantages of sophisticated weaponry.

Finally, we must consider a sobering fact—one that analysts don't like to grapple with. Armed conflict kills combatants. There is not a single, responsible leader in this country who will endanger more lives than absolutely necessary. If through technology we can reduce the number of combatants and support people in a war zone, we have no choice but to do so. There are no trade-offs on this issue.

Perhaps the most promising solution to the dilemma of coping with divergent academic, demographic, and technological trends, for the advocates of both simpler and more sophisticated systems, is the proper application of advanced technologies. We need to maximize the full benefit of increasing equipment sophistication. In the past, that usually meant increased complexity. But complexity can be handled by developing what the Air Force calls the manpower-hardware interface.

Reliability Improvements

	Mean Time between Failure (Hours)	
	old	new
UHF Radios	30–100	1,000+
Tactical Air Navigation (TACAN)	100	1,075
Weather Radar	28	704
VHF Radios	400–575	9,700
Inertial Navigation System	75	2,080
Doppler Radar	28	1,950
F-111 Signal Converter	39	1,447

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Sophistication need not imply complexity. With a proper manpower-hardware interface, advanced technology can make the new systems less complex and more reliable—an inherent simplicity. We must set increasingly more demanding reliability goals and design criteria for new systems (with increased front-end R&D funding). The objective is to improve the reliability of the system in wartime while reducing manpower costs for training, maintenance, and logistics. To show what can be done, the Air Force is insisting on new standards for mean-time-between-failure (MTBF) on aircraft electronic components to improve combat performance (see the table).

There are many immediate payoffs. Turnaround times quicken, increasing the amount of time that the equipment is available for combat. Crew members' and maintenance technicians' confidence in the equipment grows—and faith in the equipment is a documented confidence builder in wartime. Training can be more realistic if concern over equipment failures and adequate spares is reduced.

. . . real potential exists for not only improving weapons systems effectiveness but also easing future manpower problems.

Better MTBF makes simpler maintenance strategies possible. Line replaceable units (LRUs), for example, would greatly reduce the need for troubleshooting at the flightline, further reducing the number of technicians. Manpower levels would be determined more by battle damage than by reliability maintenance. And if the failure rate of LRU assemblies is reduced, less intermediate subsystem repair would be needed. In fact, throwaway components could completely eliminate repairs in a forward area.

The cost of training people is high, in dollars and in time. But given the above improvements, maintenance training programs could be shortened, saving both money and skilled manpower. Flightline supervisors would spend more time supervising and less time giving inexperienced technicians on-the-job training. Demands on the overall logistics system could be lightened, since fewer spares would be needed. The result: major improvement in our ability to maintain technologically sophisticated equipment with available people.

Maginot Line

What wonders of technology promise to offer spectacular improvements over today's maintenance systems? Such things as interactive data bases, on-board diagnostics, real-time digital distribution networks, built-in test/fault isolation test (BIT/FIT), very high speed integrated circuits (VHSIC), graceful degredation, and transparent technology—all using validated engineering principles—are on the drawing board. Another example: Modular units, which would conform to the shape of the fuselage and contain munitions, fuel, or most-likely-to-break parts, could be designed into next-generation weapons systems to offer not only quick combat turnaround times but even more spectacular manpower savings, particularly in servicing—but only if the necessary technology can be perfected.

There are cost trade-offs with such a strategy. Initial development, design, and engineering costs would be higher. Also needed is a way to predict the types and numbers of people who will be available to operate the system ten to fifteen years hence. Increased reliability doesn't come cheap, since more robust parts and stringent manufacturing controls would be slightly more expensive. Life-cycle costs, however, would be reduced significantly.

Incentives are needed to ensure that new designs and improvements in MTBF are carried out. Despite the advances in avionics and MTBF, many aircraft are still grounded by traditional problems with hydraulics, brakes, and engines. Warranties, insuring performance of the contractor's system or components for a specified number of years in the field, might be a way to proceed. Japanese industry has taken this a step further, delaying final payments and bonuses to suppliers until the components have been proven in everyday use over several years.

In the past the quality and number of people, their training requirements, and systems' maintenance needs were not always factored into the equation as major costs and potential problems. Systems specifications were established in a vacuum. Often at the last minute, manpower and personnel specialists were given the task of developing ways to support the operation and maintain the new equipment. Recruiting and training lead times for the people required were rarely, if ever, considered.

But new weapons systems are essential. Their characteristics are determined by anticipated or observed changes in the threat and by technological improvements. The issue now is how to use that new technology to meet the threat *while* reducing the expenditure of resources. Through full development of the manpower-hardware interface, real potential exists for not only improving weapons systems' effectiveness but also easing future manpower problems.

The bottom line is that the defense of this nation cannot rest on yesterday's fortifications. We cannot fall behind a "Maginot line" of less sophisticated equipment and expect to win a conflict against a force that is both technologically and numerically superior. The national defense effort must continue to be based on sophisticated technological advantages that make our weapons highly capable—and simpler to operate and maintain.

Tidal W. McCoy

1. Cost differentials are estimated by factoring in then-year dollars, production rates, labor costs, and a price comparison of the aircraft as a percent of gross national product.
2. Verne Orr, "Scientific Illiteracy in the High Tech Age" in *Air Force Magazine*, Jan. 1983.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Postscript

Misreporting the Pulitzer Prize

Joshua Muravchik

The morning after the announcement of this year's Pulitzer prizes, the *Washington Post* devoted the full back page of its "Style" section to a display picturing the *Post*'s two award winners—Loren Jenkins and Loretta Tofani. This unusual advertisement was the way the *Post* chose to congratulate them and also to congratulate itself. That the picture of Mr. Jenkins, whose award was shared with Thomas Friedman of the *New York Times*, was placed above that of Ms. Tofani, whose award was unshared, suggests which of the two was more gratifying to the *Post*. Indeed the whole exercise in self-congratulation seemed to reflect the *Post*'s pleasure at being honored in an area in which it had suffered much criticism—its coverage of Israeli actions in Lebanon. The point was made plain by Mr. Jenkins himself, who said, according to the *Post*, that he felt a "sense of vindication" because "the paper was getting a lot of flak about its coverage out of West Beirut."

That the *Post* was eager for such vindication was made evident in the way it approached the Pulitzer competition. In the category of international reporting the *Post* made two entries—Mr. Jenkins for his coverage of Lebanon and the *Washington Post* Foreign Service, collectively, for its coverage of Lebanon. No entries were made for the other international news covered by the *Post* this year in such places as El Salvador, Nicaragua, Afghanistan, or Poland.

The *Post*'s eagerness for vindication was also apparent in the wording of the self-congratulatory advertisement. Alongside Mr. Jenkins's photograph was a single phrase in a type size ordinarily reserved for banner headlines. "For his coverage of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and its aftermath," it said. There are, however, a number of problems with this. One is that Mr. Jenkins covered the "Israeli invasion of Lebanon" hardly at all.

Israeli forces entered Lebanon on June 6. Mr. Jenkins's first by-line appeared on August 9, three days before the end of the Israeli bombardment of West Beirut.

Merely a "Rotation"

During the ten weeks between the arrival in Lebanon of the Israelis and the arrival of Mr. Jenkins, the *Post* of course did carry coverage from West Beirut, daily coverage, often on page 1. The author of the vast bulk of this was Jonathan Randal. Mr. Randal is a man who has made no secret of his rather pronounced views about the Middle East. In an essay in the *Post*'s "Outlook" section, he made the startling assertion that "since the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, Israel [has] habituated the Arab world . . . to a rising level of violence in this region." Throughout his coverage of the Lebanon war, Mr. Randal's views permeated his news stories, evoking many protests from Washington's Jewish community. When, ten weeks into the war, Mr. Jenkins was sent to Beirut to replace Mr. Randal, it appeared that the *Post* had decided to pull Mr. Randal off the story. The *Post*'s assistant managing editor for foreign news, Jim Hoagland, denies this, saying the change was nothing more than a "normal rotation," but Mr. Randal did not leave Beirut, his permanent home. Rather, according to Mr. Hoagland, Mr. Randal went on an "overdue" six months' leave to write a book. The book is about the war in Lebanon. Why Mr. Randal needed leave in midstream from his responsibilities covering the war in Lebanon to work on a book about the war in Lebanon is hard to understand, as is the claim that Mr. Randal's leave for this purpose was "overdue" unless the *Post* had advance notice of the war.

Vindication?

Although the *Post* sought vindication of its coverage of Israel's "invasion of Lebanon," it did not do the one thing that could have won it such vindication, at least from the Pulitzer board, namely to have nominated Jonathan Randal. Nor did it, in nominating Mr. Jenkins, focus on his first weeks in Lebanon, including the last part of the Israeli seige of Beirut, which in a broad definition might be considered as having been part of the Israeli "invasion." In submitting ten articles to the Pulitzer board as the basis for Mr. Jenkins's nomination, the *Post* included only one from August. The other nine were from September and December, and it was the September ones that the Pulitzer board cited in making the award, specifically Mr. Jenkins's coverage of the Sabra and Shatilla massacres. By claiming that Mr. Jenkins won his award for his coverage of the "invasion of Lebanon" rather than of the massacres, the *Post* claimed a vindication that no one had given it.

In fact, in making this claim the *Post* flatly misrepresented what the Pulitzer board had said. The board said that its award was for Mr. Jenkins's coverage of the "Israeli invasion of *Beirut* and its aftermath" (emphasis added). When asked if this was a slip of the pen, whether the board meant to say "Lebanon" but said "Beirut" by mistake, board representatives say no, the board said what it meant. The "invasion of Beirut," a term derived from one of the ten articles by Jenkins, refers to the move by Israeli forces into West Beirut in the aftermath of the assassination of Bashir Gemayel. This set the stage for the Sabra and Shatilla massacres. The move into West Beirut and then the massacres were the subjects of Mr. Jenkins's September articles submitted by the *Post* and cited by the Pulitzer board.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

When interviewed on this subject, Jim Hoagland refused to answer many questions, saying that "the Pulitzer prize speaks for itself." But, then, the *Post* didn't quite let the Pulitzer speak for itself because the Pulitzer citation didn't quite say what the *Post* wished it had said. So the *Post* took a full-page ad in the *Post* in order to mislead its readers about what the Pulitzer was for. In doing so it ironically provided an example of the kind of stretching of facts to fit a preconception that was so evident in the *Post*'s coverage of the war in Lebanon.

The *Post* may not have been the only party in this episode that was motivated by the search for vindication. In discussing the selections, Pulitzer spokesmen were much more articulate in explaining why Mr. Friedman's work merited the award than in explaining why Mr. Jenkins's did. Had they given the award just to Mr. Friedman, the Pulitzer board would have seemed to confirm the critics of press coverage of Lebanon. Both Martin Peretz in the *New Republic* and I in *Policy Review* had singled out Mr. Friedman as someone whose balanced, accurate reporting stood in contrast to that of most of his journalistic colleagues, notably those of the *Post*. By giving the prize instead jointly to correspondents for both of the nation's two leading newspapers, the Pulitzer board seemed to cast a vote of general approval for U.S. press coverage of Lebanon. Could the Pulitzer organization, which is made up primarily of journalists, have been motivated by the wish of the whole journalistic fraternity to vindicate itself over Lebanon?

Whitewash

There are two reasons to suspect that this might be so. The Pulitzer organization is part of Columbia University, housed in Columbia's Graduate School of Journalism, where the Pulitzer board's chief officer serves as an adjunct professor. The school also publishes a magazine, the *Columbia Journalism Review*. This fall the *CJR* featured its own study of press coverage of the war in Lebanon. The study was written by Roger Morris with research assistance by *CJR* interns. The *CJR* study concluded that Beirut "was a graveyard [for] critics' charges of unprofessional reporting" and that "readers and viewers could have asked for little more" than they got from the performance of the U.S. press in Lebanon. What made the *CJR* study so extraordinary—what made it invite the epithet "whitewash"—was that in contrast to other examinations of this subject, which found notable variations in the quality of coverage (for example, between the *Times* and the *Post*), Mr. Morris found no such variations. The coverage, by his account, was uniformly wonderful.

Dubious Honor

The second reason to wonder about the motivations behind this Pulitzer prize is the composition of the jury that weighed the entries in the international reporting category. This jury of five included one professor of journalism and one columnist who writes usually about family matters; neither is known for any particular views about the Middle East. The other three jurors were editors of newspapers that distinguished themselves for their sharp, even strident, opposition to Israel's actions in Lebanon: The *Des Moines Register,* the *Louisville Courier-Journal,* and the *Spokane Spokesmen Review and Chronicle.* A survey by the Anti-Defamation League, written long before the Pulitzer nominations, found the *Register* to be among the six most anti-Israel of forty-five major newspapers and found the *Courier-Journal* to be among the ten most anti-Israel of fifty smaller newspapers surveyed. The *Spokesmen Review* was not included in the ADL's sample, but its editorial stance was so critical of Israel's actions in Lebanon as to have been described as "raucous" by one former member of its staff. It ran, for example, its own cartoon likening Prime Minister Begin to Adolf Hitler. The point is that in the face of charges that U.S. media coverage of Lebanon exhibited unprofessional bias, these three editors all ran newspapers that themselves felt in need of vindication. Just as by congratulating its two writers, the *Post* was indirectly congratulating itself, so by honoring jointly the *Times* and the *Post,* the Pulitzer board was pronouncing an implicit favorable judgment on U.S. newspaper coverage in general of Lebanon, including the work of the editors who made up the jury. There is less vindication in this than meets the eye.

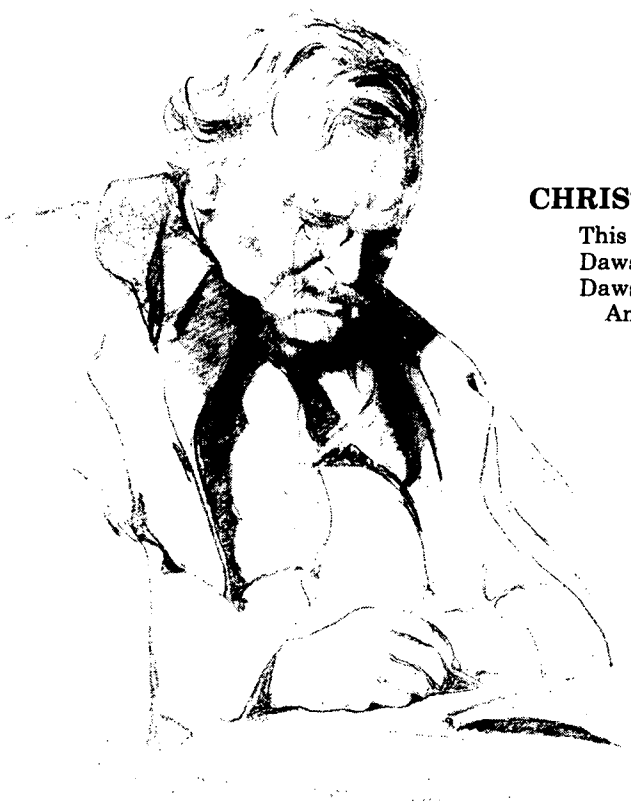
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Chesterton Review

Special issues:

ERIC GILL, November, 1982

— **G.K. Chesterton**, "Essays on Gill."
— **Sir John Rothenstein**, "Some Recollections of Eric Gill."
— **Brocard Sewell**, "Aspects of Eric Gill."
— **Mary Ellen Evans**, "Eric Gill, A Man Out of Balance."
— **J.M. Purcell**, "Eric Gill as a Polemicist."
— Illustrations of Gill's art.



CHRISTOPHER DAWSON, May, 1983

This issue is edited by Christina Scott, Dawson's daughter, and the author of the new Dawson biography.

Among the contributors are:

— **Chauncey Stillman**, the founder of the Chair of Roman Catholic Studies at Harvard University of which Dawson was the first occupant.
— **John J. Mulloy**, who has edited, among other books, *The Dynamics of World History,* and who was in close touch with Christopher Dawson during Dawson's stay in America.
— **Bruno Schlesinger**, a close friend of Christopher Dawson and Chairman of the Lilly Foundation for Christian Culture at the University of Notre Dame, South Bend, Indiana.
— **J. Ambrose Raftis, C.S.B.**, the President of the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies at the University of Toronto.
— **Neville Braybrooke**, a well-known English author and editor.
— **E.J. Oliver**, biographer, novelist and literary critic.

An international quarterly of literary criticism, social philosophy, and theology. The *Review* also includes book reviews, illustrations, as well as uncollected essays and short stories by G.K. Chesterton and other twentieth-century authors.

SPECIAL BONUS:
With each new subscription you receive a free copy of one of the special issues.

Please send order form with payment to **THE CHESTERTON REVIEW**
1437 College Drive, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada S7N 0W6

Subscription cost $12.00 or £8.00 per year.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

_____

Bonus Special Issues (Check one)

◯ **ERIC GILL**
◯ **CHRISTOPHER DAWSON**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Is God Essential to Conservatism?

Antony Flew

It has often been urged that a religious, and in particular, a Christian, commitment is, if not an essential element in, then at least in some other way presupposed by political conservatism. The classic *Reflections on the Revolution in France,* for instance, asks: "Who, born within the last forty years, has read one word of Collins, and Toland, and Tindal, and Chubb, and Morgan, and that whole race who called themselves Freethinkers?" Burke then continues: "We know, and what is better, we feel inwardly, that religion is the basis of civil society, and the source of all good and of all comfort. . . . Violently condemning neither the Greek nor the Armenian, nor, since heats are subsided, the Roman system of religion, we prefer the Protestant; not because we think it has less of the Christian religion in it, but because, in our judgment, it has more."[1]

In another standard presentation of the conservative case, Quintin Hogg—now the Viscount Hailsham and, under Margaret Thatcher, Lord Chancellor of England—makes it a rather more specific matter of presupposed values: "The basis for the justification of the right to own private property is ultimately the belief in the infinite value of human personality, but this value can only be seen in its true light in a world assumed to be theocentric—God-centered."[2] Yet others have stressed the relevant importance and implications of the doctrines of the Fall and of Original Sin. Creatures such as we cannot but be constitutionally unfitted for citizenship in Utopia. Some too have heeded Burke's warning in the paragraph subsequent to our second quotation: "But if, in the moment of riot, and in a drunken delirium from the hot spirit drawn out of the alembic of hell, which in France is now so furiously boiling, we should uncover our nakedness, by throwing off that Christian religion which has hitherto been our boast and comfort . . . we are apprehensive (being well aware that the mind will not endure a void) that some uncouth, pernicious, and degrading superstition might take place of it."

A [Christian commitment] as a defining characteristic of the true conservative . . . would exclude far too many sterling people.

This last real and certainly still present danger was, way back in the early fifties, the main burden of Ernest van den Haag's response to Sidney Hook's characteristically staunch and totally secular manifesto, "Religion and the Intellectuals." In his "Open Letter to Sidney Hook," Professor van den Haag argued: "Transcendent myth is required just for the purpose of making tolerable the difference between even the best of social systems and eschatological perfection—ultimate justice." He challenged Professor Hook: "Don't you think that Dr. Fuchs, Alger Hiss *et al.* have embraced Communism not because of, but despite, what it is to 'live tensely under the discipline that such a faith instills in them?' "[3] At that time both Professor Hook and Professor van den Haag must have had fresh memories of recent Roman Catholic service as a bulwark against Bolshevism. In Italy's 1948 elections, the Church pulled out all the stops to defeat an equally wholehearted Communist Party offensive. One poster in that campaign showed a voter in the solitude of a polling booth, over the menacing caption: "Stalin can't see you. But God can. Vote Christian Democrat!"

To the first and boldest suggestion—the suggestion that some theist and perhaps even some specifically Christian commitment should be demanded as one defining characteristic of the true conservative—the immediate and surely by itself sufficient objection is that this would exclude from that good company of ours far too many sterling people. It must for a start preclude all possibility of finding or forming any substantial conservative forces in any country that is not and is not going to become Christian or at least in some other way monotheistic.

Coming nearer home, such a stipulation would blackball Burke's own older contemporary and compatriot, David Hume. For Hume was no Christian, and only in the most attenuated sense, if at all, any kind of theist. Yet Hume was by common consent the greatest of British philosophers, and he has now at last begun to be recognized as one of the major thinkers of political conservatism. (His acceptance as such in the United States will perhaps be helped by noticing that he was a friend of Benjamin Franklin and that he foresaw, and lived just long enough to welcome, the American Declaration of Independence.)

To the weaker and less arbitrarily definitional claim that some fundamental Christian doctrines are

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

somehow presupposed by beliefs that are essentials of conservatism in anyone's book, the first response has to be that if this is indeed so, and if these essentials cannot also and alternatively be sustained on quite different and independent grounds, then the long-term prospects for conservatism, even in the historically Christian countries, must be extremely bleak. Perhaps the prospects are bleak, but not, I think, for this reason. The point here is that although the present century has in many parts of the Third World been a period of unparalleled expansion, in most of the industrialized First World, and in almost all the Second World, both Christian religious practice and, by all behavioral indications, Christian religious belief have been and still are in an apparently accelerating and seemingly irreversible decline.[4]

Declining Signs of Faith

The faithfulness of this general picture is confirmed by every available index of measurement. It is not simply a matter of falling nominal rolls of membership, significant though these are. Such formal indications are supported by the harder statistics of actual participation: figures for those taking Easter communion and attending on other days of obligation; figures of children baptized and of the proportions of the baptized who are later confirmed; figures revealing the rising popularity of such traditionally proscribed activities as fornication, adultery, abortion, and divorce; and so on, and on and on.

Nor is this picture of the decline of religion any the less generally correct for three distracting facts. First, the extent and the rate of erosion differs from country to country and from church to church. Sometimes too there is a local and temporary halt or reversal of this Long March of secularization. Second, much of the abandoning of traditional beliefs and practices has occurred and is occurring, quite inconspicuously and often unwittingly, within the shells of traditional organizations. Third, the United States has been an important, though partial and presumably temporary, exception. Certainly there was in the United States a remarkable increase in active church membership in the first decades after World War II. The present shrinking of most of the main affiliates of the National Council of Churches may be for the moment more than offset by the spectacular growth of the born-again biblical religion of the electronic media.

In the more developed countries, therefore, we appear to confront an irreversible long-term decline of Christian conviction. So, if we want to find or to make a brighter future for conservatism, we should be eager to explore the possibilities of basing our crucial beliefs upon alternative, nonreligious foundations—not of course that success in such inquiries will have any tendency to show that these beliefs cannot be as well or better grounded in a continuing Christian commitment.

Take, for example, the insistence that everyone should be entitled, as best he may, both to acquire and to hold private property, and the associated demand that the entire economy should be in the main both private and, at least potentially, competitive. There is, surely, no imperative call to conscript a Creator into service here. These two basic demands can be defended, and by many are, in totally secular terms. In support of the first we can erect a doctrine of minimal yet universal human rights. This Kantian doctrine is itself founded upon respect for persons, not—incoherently—as ends in themselves, but rather as formers of ends for themselves. The claim is that persons are, as such, entitled to pursue their self-chosen ends wherever and whenever this pursuit in no way prejudices the equal rights of others.[5] No one can enjoy much personal liberty or even much self-respect if every resource that he uses can be withdrawn at the absolute discretion either of some other individual or of some collective.

In support of the second insistence, we can and should appeal to both theory and experience. These provide overwhelming demonstrations of the advantages, simply as mechanisms of wealth creation, of predominantly private and pluralist economies over the state monopolistic. Thus it is, surely, *a priori* obvious that investment decisions and other economic initiatives are likely to turn out to be maximally wealth-creating to the extent that those who make them have the most substantial interests in them. In practice we now have several decisively instructive track records available for comparisons. Of these the most familiar are those of East and West Germany. But there are similar contrasts to be made between the fruits of soldier socialism in Burma and private enterprise in Thailand. Perhaps most impressive of all is the difference between the performance of the Han people in mainland China, with government always and everywhere on their backs, and the achievements of their fellows in Singapore, Hong Kong, or Taiwan.[6]

Nor must we leave this particular topic without at least noticing the strong case for claiming that a pluralist economy, with a wide dispersion of private property, is in fact a practically necessary condition for the enjoyment of even the most elementary individual liberties. This point was made revealingly some years ago by the Moscow Institute of Marxism-Leninism in a discussion of "Broad Left" or "United Front" tactics: "Having once acquired political power, the working class implements the liquidation of the private ownership of the means of production. . . . As a result, under socialism, there remains no ground for the existence of any opposition parties counterbalancing the Communist Party."[7]

Willful Blindness

Another fundamental that many conservatives like to derive from Christianity is a pessimistic, not to say jaundiced, estimate of human nature and human potentiality. Yet an estimate, in fact, so altogether realistic has no need of any theological support. It is already and abundantly sustained by the whole past story of mankind as well as by our own repeatedly disillusioning

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

everyday experience. What is so remarkable, and what can never be too often remarked, is how frequently and how arbitrarily those who are not conservatives choose to ignore these altogether familiar human realities. Such inconsistency and such willful blindness took a peculiarly grotesque and extreme shape in many of the student revolutionaries of the late sixties. While refusing to trust out of their sight anyone whom they actually knew, these shining-eyed but dirty-mouthed campus Jacobins nevertheless insisted that in far-off Havana or Hanoi, where ruthless committees hold absolute and irresponsible power, all manner of things must be well.

Marx himself, the spiritual parent or grandparent of all our contemporary utopians, is only marginally less preposterous in the resolute blindness and systematic inconsistency of his treatment of human nature. For, having early abandoned that belief in providential guidance and control, which alone could warrant a conviction that the Kingdom of God is bound in the end to be established on Earth, Marx went on to spend the rest of his life developing and proclaiming a secularized analogue of St. Augustine's Christian philosophy of history. (Not for nothing has that descendant of two long lines of rabbis been called the last of the Hebrew prophets!)

But now, it is all very well to put your faith in such an ideal consummation if you first believe that we were indeed designed to be subjects in that perfect and peaceable kingdom—and designed too by a Creator whose purposes cannot ultimately be frustrated. It is quite another thing to hold to similar conclusions when the sole guarantor of the promised consummation is history hypostatized, and when the citizens of your future stateless state will be, like us now, undesigned products of evolution by natural selection. The *Communist Manifesto* proclaims for the fairly immediate future the ineluctable advent of a new, worldwide, conflict-free social order, an order in which "the free development of each will be a condition of the free development of all."[8] How are we to characterize this atheist promise and the subsequent attempt to discover some natural and scientific guarantee of its fulfillment, save as deceit and delusion sprung from a self-blinding, bigoted, juvenile, Hegelian philosophical infatuation?[9]

It would be wrong to conclude the present discussion without taking note of one very unwelcome fact. The fact is, though those who appeal to the Christian foundations of social and political conservatism are usually and understandably reluctant to take account of this, that nowadays most of those who speak for most of the traditional and long-established Christian organizations take their more or less emphatic stands among our opponents.

. . . nowadays most of those who speak for the traditional Christian organizations take their stands among our opponents.

Consider for a start the current and still formidably growing campaigns for unilateral disarmament and, in particular and crucially, unilateral nuclear disarmament in and by countries standing in the way of the Soviet socialist drive to world hegemony. Christian leaders were among the first to fall in behind Moscow's lead in denouncing U.S. plans to develop the misnamed neutron bomb—that "typically capitalist weapon," which by killing the attackers without devastating everything else might have stopped dead the now overwhelmingly superior Warsaw Pact tank armies. The same seems to be true of all the other self-styled anti-nuclear and peace movements in NATO countries. These all began, or began to grow, not while the U.S.S.R. was establishing its present military ascendancy, nor when she began to install those SS-20s targeted on Western Europe, but only when there was first talk of offsetting this threat with those still unavailable cruise missiles. It is aptly symbolic that the two acknowledged inspirers of today's Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament in Britain are Edward Thompson, a lifelong and admitted Marxist-Leninist, and Bruce Kent, a professedly Roman Catholic Monsignor.

Or consider, again, the increasingly notorious record of the World Council of Churches, ever eager to fund Marxist-Leninist guerrilla movements and never willing to come to the aid of Christian victims of communist persecution. It is, surely, significant that although the degenerating transformation of the WCC into what is now in effect a fellow-traveling front organization has been tolerably well-documented, such publicity seems to have provoked almost no effective protest from, nor disaffiliation by, any of its member churches. (The only exception, to my knowledge, altogether characteristic and wholly creditable, has been the Salvation Army. It cannot stomach either the support for revolutionary terrorism or the lack of concern with the New Testament gospel.[10])

Or consider, yet again, almost any recent public affairs statement either by the National Council of Churches in the United States or by the British Council of Churches. For example: During the 1979 British general election, the BCC formulated a list of twenty questions for church meetings to put to candidates. These were all, and quite obviously, designed to produce the same answer: Vote Labour, but whatever you do, never Conservative![11] In October 1982, while I was writing this essay, the Laity Commission of the Roman Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales published an explicit and extremely fierce attack on the Thatcher administration. It is accused of deliberately setting out to build an unjust society. The commission takes it absolutely for

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

granted, as if they were reiterating some element in the *magisterium*, that justice, or at any rate social justice, requires the enforcement, by and through the power of the state, of a universal equality or near-equality of condition—and this, apparently, irrespective of any individual entitlements, individual deserts, or individual efforts. Mrs. Thatcher thus stands condemned without excuse, her government being "the first for generations to reverse the trend towards equality by means of the tax system"!

It is now too late to develop any challenge to the interpretations of Christianity upon which these various anticonservative recommendations purport to be based. It might also be thought improper for an avowed unbeliever to question the right of others to bear the Christian name. So I will end with no more than two brief comments.

First, it is hard indeed to see how this McGovernite misconception of justice as a state-enforced equality of outcome is to be derived from the recorded teachings of Jesus. Jesus, it should be recalled, taught both a Parable of the Talents (Luke 19:12–27, and Matthew 25:14–30) and a Parable of the Vineyard (Luke 20:9–16, and Mark 12:1–72). Yet he consistently, and it might seem systematically, failed to exploit any such fine chances either to condemn private business or to summon the intervention of the Procrustean state.

Second, we must remember in the present context what was said earlier about the present progressive erosion, even within the hierarchies of traditionally Christian organizations, of the traditional Christian faith. In some persons that faith has been partly or even totally replaced by a more fashionable, secular world outlook.[12] They retain still a few of the old words, but these are drained now of their old conventionally religious meanings. Certainly the extremes of "liberation theology" have no more to do with God than with liberty. (As with the "freedom-fighters" whom the WCC everywhere supports, the fight is against rather than for the referent objects.) The result is a Third-World rather than otherworldly, pseudo-Christian, semi-Marxism that Burke would rightly have described as an "uncouth, pernicious and degrading superstition . . . a drunken delirium . . . drawn out of the alembic of hell"!

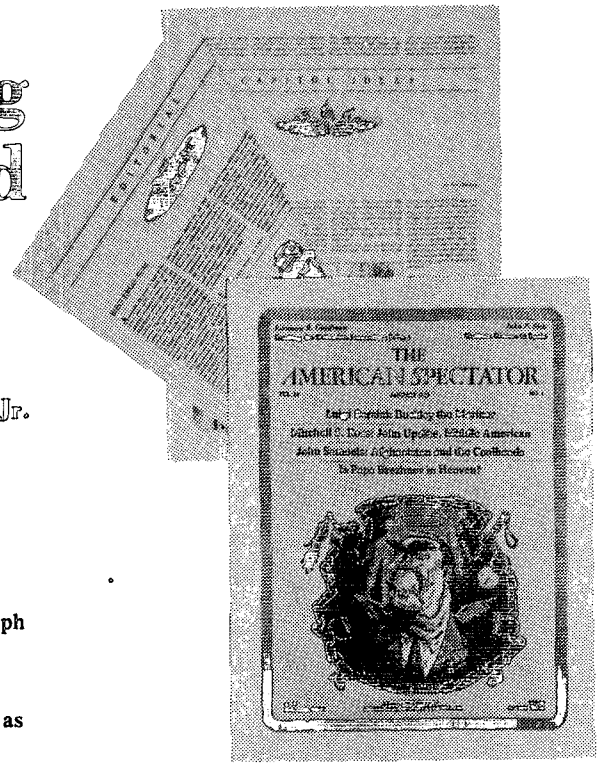
References

1. Everyman edition (London and New York: J. M. Dent and E. P. Dutton, 1910), pp. 86–87.
2. Quintin Hogg, *The Conservative Case* (Harmondsworth and Baltimore Penguin Books, 1959), p. 99.
3. Both the Symposium and the Open Letter appeared in *Partisan Review*, the former in the issue for March 1950, the latter in that for July–August 1950, our quotations being from pages 609 and 610.
4. See first K. L. Latourette's monumental *History of the Expansion of Christianity* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1971), and then update it from the publications of the Centre for the Study of World Evangelization in Nairobi, Kenya and of the Missions Advanced Research and Communications Center in Kenwood, Calif.
5. See my *Politics of Procrustes* (London and Buffalo: Temple Smith and Prometheus, 1981), Chapter II, Section 3. Procrustes was a legendary Greek innkeeper. He provided only one bed but accommodated all comers by racking out the short and cutting down the tall.
6. See, for instance, my "Social Science: Making Visible the Invisible Hands" in *Quadrant* (Sydney, NSW), Vol. XXV, No. 170, pp. 24–9.
7. Quoted in *The Economist* (London) for June 17, 1972, p. 23. This document needs to be forced on the attention of anyone who might consider voting anything but Conservative in Britain, along with a reminder that the future socialist monopoly party does not have to be called Communist or even formally blessed by Moscow.
8. K. Marx and F. Engels, *Communist Manifesto*, translated by S. Moore and edited by A. J. P. Taylor (Harmondsworth and Baltimore: Penguin, 1967), p. 105.
9. See my "Prophecy or Philosophy, Historicism or History," to appear in C. Wilson and R. Duncan, eds., *Marx Refuted* (Oxford: Blackwell, forthcoming).
10. See, for instance, E. W. Lefever, *Amsterdam to Nairobi: The World Council of Churches and the Third World* (Washington, D.C.: Ethics and Public Policy Center of Georgetown University, 1974); Edward Norman, *Christianity and World Order* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1979); and Bernard Smith, *The Fraudulent Gospel: Politics and the World Council of Churches* (Richmond, Surrey, U.K.: Foreign Affairs Publishing Company, 1977). Mr. Norman suggests, and Mr. Smith tries and I think succeeds in showing, that the WCC has long since ceased to merit the description "a Christian organization." Perhaps I will be permitted to add, in the comparative privacy of a note, that my father was before, during, and immediately after World War II much involved in the formation of the WCC, which started very differently. Whenever I read of its present activities, and its studious refusals to act, I hear him turning miserably in his grave.
11. "Will you support steps to discourage investment in South Africa? What measures do you propose in order to create a more equal and just society in Britain. . . ? Do you agree that worker participation in industrial decision-making should be greatly extended?" and so on. These leading questions were drawn from a BCC book, *Britain Today and Tomorrow*. The Roman Catholic document mentioned next, also published by the organization concerned, is *Community, Benefit and Taxation*.
12. Compare, with the works mentioned in Note 10, the findings of a recent confidential survey of the beliefs of 1,100 theological teachers in U.S. seminaries and schools of religion, published in the summer 1982 issue of *This World* (Institute for Educational Affairs and American Enterprise Institute).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"The most amazing and outrageous and interesting journal in America."

—William F. Buckley, Jr.



The White House gets it . . . so do members of the Cabinet and Congress . . . and you should too, that is . . .

. . . if you'd love to give a hot foot to the likes of General Jaruzelski . . . the entire Politburo . . . Betty Friedan, Ralph Nader, and Billy Graham . . . Tip O'Neill and Howard Baker . . . and every posturing, pompous, Third-World diplomat . . . and then watch what happens.

. . . if you want the very best writing of such luminaries as Tom Wolfe, Malcolm Muggeridge, Ben J. Wattenberg, Ernest van den Haag, Tom Bethell, George Will, Hugh Kenner, Michael Novak, Taki, Walter E. Williams, and the Spectator's founder and editor-in-chief, syndicated columnist R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

. . . if you're interested in knowing the gut, history-changing issues of the day months in advance of their making the national press and network news.

For example, long before the P.R. firm of Reagan, Regan, Kemp, Roth and Stockman stuck the electorate's toe in the hot socket of Supply-Side Economics, the scheme's big daddy, George Gilder, was discussing it in depth in the pages of The American Spectator. Long before "Yellow Rain" in Afghanistan and Cambodia hit the front pages and editorial columns, Spectator readers were experts on the subject. The liveliest, nastiest debate on Nixon, Kissinger, and the destruction of Cambodia took place in these pages between William Shawcross and Henry Kissinger's chief researcher. And Margaret Thatcher's high male-hormone count was openly discussed long before the Falklands crisis.

In short, The American Spectator is where the action is! And you're invited to get in on it and savor it!

What they say:

The Washington Post: ". . . Washington's new "in" magazine.

Time Magazine: ". . . a (monthly) 40-page compendium of essays, satires, diatribes as well as acid-etched reviews of books, movies, and saloons (recent recommendation: Delisa's Bungalow Beer Garden in South St. Louis). The Spectator's list of contributors reads like a Who's Who of the American Right and Center. Among them are Buckley, Public Interest co-editor Irving Kristol, Harvard Government Professor James Q. Wilson, Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan and social theorist Sidney Hook."

Send today for a Low-Cost No-Risk Trial!

THE AMERICAN SPECTATOR
P.O. Box 1969, Bloomington, IN 47402

Open my trial subscription to The American Spectator (eight giant, tabloid-sized issues) conveniently delivered right to me.

☐ Check for $11.95 enclosed. In return for my prepayment send me two additional issues (10 for the price of 8). Full refund is guaranteed if I don't like the first issue.

☐ Bill me later for $11.95 (sorry, no additional issues; only 8). If I don't like my first issue, I'll write "cancel" across the invoice, return it to you, and owe nothing.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Canadian and foreign subscribers, please add $4 for postage. 3NFB

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Tales from the Public Sector

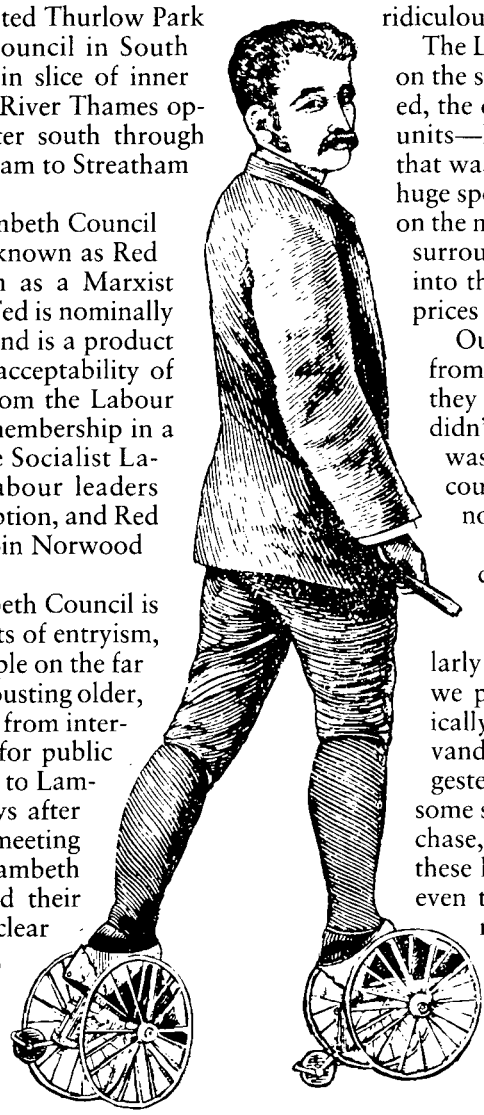
Joggers and Trimmers

John Blundell

From 1978 to 1982 I represented Thurlow Park Ward on Lambeth Borough Council in South London. Lambeth is a long, thin slice of inner London that stretches from the River Thames opposite the Palace of Westminster south through Kennington, Brixton, and Clapham to Streatham and Norwood.

During my term of office, Lambeth Council was led by Ted Knight, locally known as Red Ted, who prefers to be known as a Marxist rather than a Communist. Red Ted is nominally a member of the Labour party and is a product of Labour's about-face on the acceptability of the far left. He was expelled from the Labour party in the mid-fifties for his membership in a "proscribed" organization, the Socialist Labour League. In the 1970s Labour leaders abandoned the policy of proscription, and Red Ted was promptly allowed to join Norwood Labour party.

Red Ted's leadership of Lambeth Council is a textbook example of the results of entryism, the process by which young people on the far left penetrate the Labour party, ousting older, more traditional Labour leaders from internal positions and nominations for public office. Red Ted was first elected to Lambeth Council in 1974. Two days after his reelection in 1978, a private meeting of all Labour councillors in Lambeth was held. Red Ted was elected their leader, and since Labour held a clear majority in the council chamber, he was thus also leader of Lambeth Council.



The jogger (from the trimmer's point of view).

These far-left young Labourites typically want to nationalize the banks and the top hundred or more corporations, bring all housing into municipal ownership, abolish the monarchy and the House of Lords, and end all forms of private education. Additionally, they support the I.R.A., want to bring British troops back from Ulster, and seek to extend trade union privileges. In Lambeth, they even sent formal letters to the Labour party's national executive committee calling for the nationalization of the funeral industry, on the grounds that since profits are immoral, profits from death must be doubly so.

In my four years on Lambeth Council, hardly a week passed when I did not witness some bizarre incident or ridiculous proposal. Here are several examples.

The Labour councillors were particularly dotty on the subject of housing. At the time I was elected, the council already owned more than 30,000 units—houses and apartments—but it seemed that was not enough. The council embarked on a huge spending spree, buying up houses that came on the market not only in our borough but also in surrounding areas. So much money was pumped into this program that in Lambeth itself, house prices rose twice as fast as in the rest of London.

Our housing officers were so busy rushing from auction to auction that on one occasion they bid on and purchased the wrong house. It didn't seem to matter that the house we bought was previously owned by another socialist council that had decided that it was not economical to remodel it.

We had a large number of people in our district wanting to live in council housing—some 15,000 families were on the waiting list. The thing I found particularly crazy was that the houses and apartments we purchased in the late seventies were typically left empty, boarded up in fact to stop vandalism. When we in the Opposition suggested selling these vacant houses or allowing some sort of homesteading or sweat-equity purchase, the response was, "We would rather leave these houses empty and boarded up for five or even ten years until we, the council, have the money to modernize them for a needy family than to sell them to people who would probably vote Tory anyway."

The financial aspect of council housing was as ridiculous as our purchasing policies. Rents were frozen for several years during a period of high inflation. Nothing was done to chase up tenants who had fallen into arrears or to deal with the 500-plus properties occupied by squatters. The account for rent arrears alone was several million pounds and still rising by 1982.

Lambeth Council in 1978–79 spent £8,500,000 on housing management, £7,300,000 on repairs, and £24,200,000 on interest charges for the funds borrowed to buy or build the units in the first place. Total: £40,000,000. On the income side, net rent amounted to £8,700,000. With a total of £15,800,000 for management and repairs, we would have saved £7,100,000 a year if we had just mailed the deeds of all these properties

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to our tenants. The borough's overall debt, including housing funds, rose to £300,000,000; this entailed interest charges amounting to £2.50 per resident per week or, in other words, £10 per week or £520 per year for a typical family of four. One of the sources of this expense was the Consumer Services Directorate, which produced bulletins on such essential topics as how to care for your potted plants and how to restore Victorian pine furniture.

The Consumer Services Directorate believed in the necessity of being accessible to the populace. Accordingly, the directorate purchased a motor home (cost: a quarter of a million pounds) and parked it, filled with directorate staff, on the main street of the borough every Saturday so that the staff would be available to deal with consumer complaints.

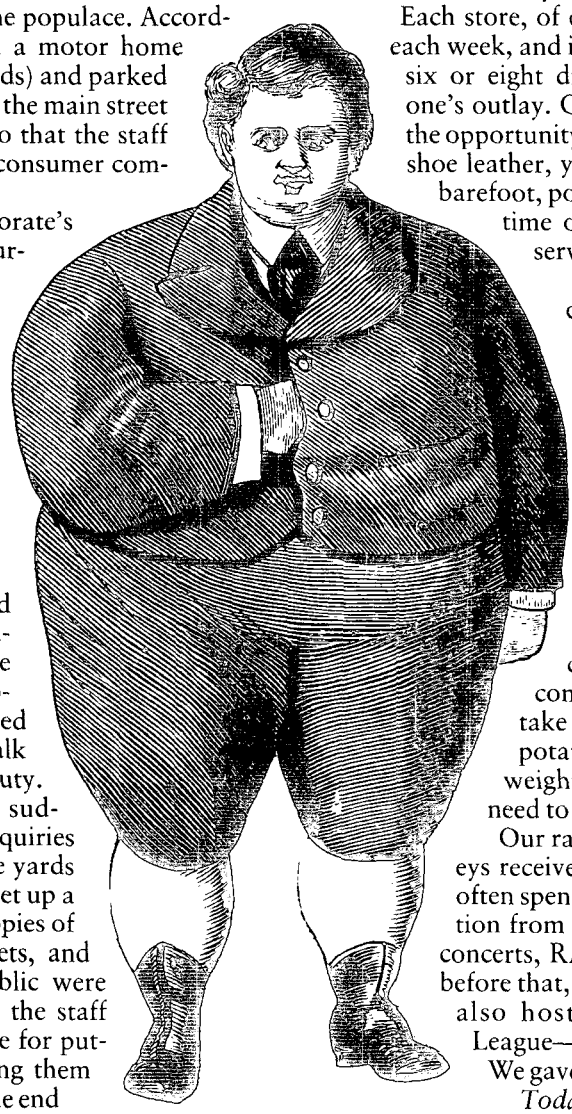
My home was near the directorate's wonted parking place. Every Saturday I would see the van parked in full view, but it was rare to see any member of the public anywhere near it. Yet statistics supplied to councillors showed that the staff dealt with an average of 50 inquiries a day. Perplexed, I took up a vantage point early one Saturday and carefully observed activity in and around the van. After three hours, only two people had been near it. I telephoned the Labour councillor who chaired the committee overseeing the directorate. Within 20 minutes he joined me, and we entered the van to talk with the four staff members on duty.

After lengthy questioning, I suddenly realized what these 50 inquiries per day represented. About three yards in front of the van, the staff had set up a rack, on which were displayed copies of the directorate's bulletins, leaflets, and brochures. Members of the public were free to help themselves. One of the staff members said he was responsible for putting out the publications, keeping them stocked up, bringing them in at the end of the day, and counting how many had gone.

This was the key. The directorate counted one leaflet gone as one inquiry. If a child took ten, this was ten inquiries. And if the staff ever wanted to prove how much they were needed by the public, all they had to do was to throw away a handful of leaflets to make their average inquiries soar.

As we left the staff to sip their tea, a gust of wind blew some of the leaflets off the rack and sent them swirling down the street.

"Another half-dozen inquiries successfully dealt with," I commented to my colleague, the Labour councillor in charge of all this. He was not amused.



The trimmer (as he is seen by the jogger).

Another classic from the Consumer Services Directorate was a weekly guide to prices in local shops. Each week, inspectors jotted down the prices of some thirty staples in the local shops and supermarkets. These were turned into a chart with all the stores on one axis and all the items on the other. The diligent consumer could call first at the directorate's caravan and after careful study could see where each item could be purchased to get the best value for money.

Each store, of course, had different loss leaders each week, and inevitably you would have to visit six or eight different emporiums to minimize one's outlay. Given the weight of certain items, the opportunity cost of your time, and the cost of shoe leather, you would have to be an athletic, barefoot, poverty-stricken person with lots of time on your hands to gain from this service.

I once pointed this out to the chairman, together with the difficulty of the mental calculations necessary to work out an optimal route. He said, "We hope to install minicomputers in all of our offices and the van. Consumers will be encouraged to call in with their shopping lists. These will be typed into the computers, and optimal routes will be printed out, showing what should be purchased at each stop. Naturally the computers will be programmed to take account of such matters as buying potatoes next to last because of their weight and eggs last of all because they need to sit on top of the other shopping."

Our rates (property taxes) and tax moneys received from central government were often spent on political causes without sanction from the electorate. We hosted several concerts, RAT (Rock Against Thatcher) and before that, RAR (Rock Against Racism). We also hosted events for the Anti Nazi League—a Socialist Workers Party front. We gave money to the social wing of *Race Today*, a black Marxist magazine, so that its members could build carnival floats. Perhaps the most infamous was the support that we gave to Union Place Resource Centre.

Union Place was a printing collective of about eight people. Over the course of my incumbency, they received five to six grants a year, totaling many tens of thousands of pounds, to cover their salaries, their plant rental, and new equipment and supplies. In theory, we were subsidizing Union Place so that they could supply community groups with inexpensive printing. In practice, as I discovered, their client list was composed almost entirely of some 200 left-wing groups throughout London.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

After I had furnished this client list to the national press, the collective's premises were unfortunately firebombed, and they scampered off to the police quick as ever may be—a turnabout from their previous attitude, indeed an attitude prevalent throughout the Lambeth Labour party, of extreme antagonism toward the police force. I would agree with those who say that much of the blame for the Brixton riots of Spring 1981 rested with the Lambeth Borough Council for fomenting hatred of the police force.

I served on many committees and led for the Opposition on the Amenity Services Committee. This committee dealt with parks, swimming pools, libraries, and so on. One of our more bizarre meetings occurred when we discussed a proposal for a Trim Trail.

No Passing Zone

The council had noted that many people in the borough had taken up jogging. This was a spontaneous and unorganized matter—people were simply taking to the sidewalks and open spaces to exercise. The council had also noted that these runners could be split into two groups: joggers and trimmers. Joggers were fit people who clipped off five-minute miles with ease and steamed past the other group, the trimmers. Trimmers were slow, plodding, overweight, unfit people. It was these second-class runners who concerned the committee. Obviously, the trimmers were a group in need. After all, God knows what psychological damage, perhaps permanent, the trimmer suffered when a jogger overtook him without even panting, all on a public thoroughfare. The trimmers were obviously at risk and severely disadvantaged.

The solution proposed was to build a Trim Trail that would wind gracefully through one of our parks, or "open spaces," as we were instructed to call them. The proposed course was designed so that the trimmer could turn off to rest at scientifically determined points. At these points, exercise equipment—situp benches, chinup bars, and so on—would be placed. To protect the trimmers from probing eyes as they panted and sweated, these areas would be made into secluded glades by planting trees and bushes all around them.

Some private research into this matter revealed that these sorts of trails were very popular in North America, where they were funded by banks, insurance companies, and other businesses. There were hundreds across Europe, all privately funded. There were thousands of them behind the Iron Curtain, all funded by the state. As far as I could discover, Lambeth was proposing to build the first state-funded Trim Trail west of the Iron Curtain.

We had fun with that point and we won. The secluded glades were quite rightly deemed a potential rapist's paradise, and the whole proposal was ridiculed as being "something straight out of Monty Python."

I sat on another tiny subcommittee, the name of which now escapes me, that dealt with funds received by the council from the government for disbursement to local groups. This tiny group provided me with two high—or low—points in my career as a councillor. We once sat considering an application from the Salvation Army for funds to—as I recall—modernize part of a hostel. The Labour councillors, who had the majority, opposed the grant because the "Sally Army" was not "the right sort" of organization to be receiving aid from Lambeth.

"Item 5,293 . . ."

Agendas for these meetings were delivered to councillors' doors by messengers. One night I arrived home to find a large parcel wrapped in brown paper on my doorstep. I lugged it inside and opened it up. It was the agenda for the next subcommittee meeting, and one agenda item was over 1,000 pages long. There were only about nine of us on this subcommittee, but at the next full council meeting I discovered that nearly sixty copies had been made, since all the relevant officers and directorates had to have one each. Inspired, I further discovered that:

- If piled one on top of each other, these pages would total thirty feet in height.
- The weight of paper was more than 250 pounds.
- If the pieces of paper used were placed end to end, the trail would stretch from Crystal Palace in South London to Hampstead Heath in North London, a distance of some fifteen miles.

At the next subcommittee meeting, it was agreed to postpone consideration of the item. This occurred toward the end of the municipal year, when committees are rearranged. Since this subcommittee was incredibly boring, most of us fled, and before it could meet again, committee assignments had been reshuffled. The council had a completely new set of the agenda made for the councillors taking over the subcommittee. The paper chain by then extended on from Hampstead Heath to the start of the M1 motorway north.

A few weeks later I gave my copy of the agenda to the editor of the *Guinness Book of World Records,* Norris McWhirter, for possible inclusion in the book. The last time I looked at the British edition, it was still there: the longest-ever agenda item.

Many other incidents come to mind.

When my colleague, Councillor Pitt, very gently rebuked the mayor (a Labour appointee) for his biased chairing of full council meetings, an uproar ensued. In the melee that followed, a Conservative colleague, Malcolm Hollis, was "kneed in the groin," as our local paper so delicately put it, by one of Red Ted's supporters, a man who also happened to be a justice of the peace.

Then there's the time I introduced a motion congratulating Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer on their engagement (part of the Prince of Wales' estates is in Lambeth). The motion failed, but in opposing it, the Labour councillors talked of their plans to turn Buckingham Palace into a home for single-parent families. The Labour chief whip made the most sordid speech I have ever heard. His colleagues rocked with laughter as he detailed his personal plans for compulsory virginity tests for future royal brides.

Fiddling

And there were all those bricks and other supplies that went missing from the Construction Services Directorate—enough to build a dozen houses. And the municipal dustmen (garbage collectors) who worked a few hours a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

day for a full day's pay, scavenged through everything for items to sell, and collected bribes under the guise of Christmas tips.

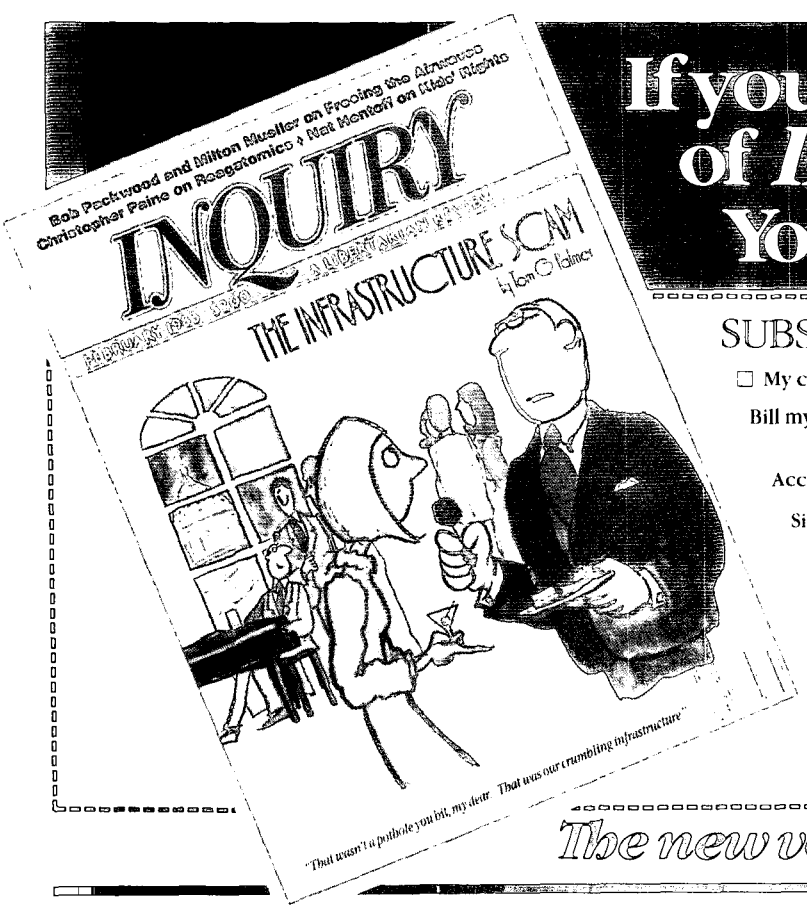
And the officer who accepted bribes for overordering goods from a certain supplier.

I wish I could tell you that Lambeth is an exception and that it is really not worth bothering oneself about the antics of the loony left. But Red Ted is still in control of Lambeth, although with a much reduced majority, his protégé Ken Livingston is leader of the Greater London Council, and along with many others they are destined to join Tony Benn in the House of Commons before too long.

The two key lessons I learned at Lambeth were that first, the far left has a better understanding than the right of the strategies and tactics needed to take power and, once it has it, how to wield it; and second, the far left is usually more ruthless, more determined, and more willing to make personal sacrifices in the pursuit of their goals.

When Red Ted took over as leader of the Lambeth Council, he and several of his followers who chaired key committees gave up their jobs and became full-time councillors, living off allowances and expenses. They were in the town hall day and night, putting pressure on their officers and making sure that their policies were implemented. The board of directors, a powerful committee of the heads of all directorates, used to be chaired by the chief executive and met almost daily. Under Red Ted's leadership, the board was virtually abolished; when it did meet, he took the chair.

A former Lambeth chief executive once described a local authority as a vast oceangoing liner. To turn such a liner around 180 degrees is a tremendous job that takes time and many square miles of open sea, the chief said. Red Ted knew this well, I think. Continuing the analogy, he threw the captain off the bridge, replaced the key officers with his own, tore up the rule book, and proceeded to handle the ocean liner as though it were a speedboat.


Bob Packwood and Milton Mueller on Fooling the Almanac
Christopher Paine on Reagatomics • Nat Hentoff on Hate Rights
INQUIRY
THE INFRASTRUCTURE SCAM
"That wasn't a pothole you hit, my dear. That was our crumbling infrastructure."

If you haven't heard of *INQUIRY* yet — You will.

SUBSCRIBE NOW. Send me the next year of INQUIRY, 12 issues, for $18.00.

☐ My check is enclosed.

Bill my ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard

Account # _____ Expiration date _____

Signature _____

Name _____

Street _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Please return to: *INQUIRY*
P.O. Box 2013
Mahopac, NY 10541

PRXI

The new voice of current events.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Fiction of Intelligence

The Puzzle Palace. *By James Bamford. (Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1982) $16.95.*

The Circus: M15 Operations, 1945–72. *By Nigel West. (Stein & Day, New York, 1983) $16.95.*

The Belarus Secret. *By John Loftus. (Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1982) $13.95.*

The Last Hero: Wild Bill Donovan. *By Anthony Cave Brown. (Times Books, New York, 1982) $24.95.*

For a long time I have been reading books on intelligence, and for the last few years I have had to read them more or less systematically. To generalize on a whole genre is always misleading, but certain observations obtrude themselves. When Raymond Chandler predicted some forty years ago a great future to the cloak-and-dagger story in contrast to the old-fashioned detective story, he was right in one way and wrong in others. Some of these books have had a phenomenal success, and there seems to be a perennial demand for fictional, factional, semifictional, and nonfictional accounts. But most did not become best-sellers, and those that did are no longer in the cloak-and-dagger tradition nor do they belong to the new microchip and influence-agent school.

Writing on espionage has developed in various directions, and some seem more auspicious than others. Some time ago a Hollywood producer told me that he would not touch an espionage scenario if he could help it; it was not the stuff box office successes were made of. But what about Ian Fleming, what about *The Day of the Jackal*? The former, I was told, belongs to the distant past; the latter had not been much of a winner.

The producer may still be wrong, but his aversion seems to be fairly widespread also among publishers. How to explain it? The old-fashioned spy story—say John Buchan's *Thirty-Nine Steps, The Three Hostages,* and *Greenmantle,* or Erskine Childers's *Riddle of the Sands*—were straightforward yarns; the authors were excellent storytellers; there was not a minute's doubt as to the identity of heroes and villains. And it was equally certain that the former would prevail in the end whereas the latter would be punished. The contemporary spy story, even in the hands of the more seasoned practitioners, has become a terribly complicated affair. The arts of telling a story and of building up suspense have sadly declined. On the other hand literary and philosophical ambitions have enormously grown: So many authors want to write novels that are "much more than a spy story." They are searching for images; the dialogue is precious, too clever by half; there are neither heroes nor villains in their stories; the protagonists are equally bored and boring. As Pauline Kael noted after watching the *Looking Glass War,* key points are never made clear—most of the time the viewer does not know what the plan is and whether things are going right or wrong. And the result is that *Thirty-Nine Steps* and other such vintage novels are reprinted year after year (and even adapted for the cinema every decade or so), whereas most of the current spy fiction is forgotten within a short time.

Cryptanalyst William Friedman, a bonafide superspy, broke Japan's diplomatic code, and his cipher machines and inductive reasoning perhaps altered the outcome of World War II. Congress awarded him $100,000.

Intelligence fiction, it is generally accepted, does not mirror the reality of intelligence. This is true for both the glamorous fantasies of Ian Fleming and the sinister fantasies of the anti-CIA school: Their aim is to entertain or, alternatively, to moralize. They are not mimetic, to use the technical term. Any resemblance to the realities of intelligence is truly accidental. As usual one can think of mitigating circumstances. "Cray I," "Platform," and the other supercomputers described by James Bamford in *The Puzzle Palace,* his recent book on the National Security Agency, are most impressive systems, but they do not generate much romance or any other kind of passion.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Supremely ineffective in her World War I efforts to secure secrets for the Germans, Mata Hari is nonetheless emblazoned in the popular imagination as the female superspy. A Dutch-Indonesian dancer-turned-spy, she was executed by the French in 1917. Seen here is actress Greta Garbo, as she played the glamorous role in the 1931 motion picture, *Mata Hari.*

Even a Shakespeare would have had difficulties with this kind of inhuman material. But this is what intelligence is nowadays largely about.

Analysis is another unlikely topic for movies and most novels. Both need action, not contemplation, and thus Robert Redford, the intelligence analyst in *Three Days of the Condor,* turns operator within the first three minutes.

How mimetic are nonfiction writings on intelligence these days? There have been in recent years some excellent books on more narrowly defined topics, such as the official British history on intelligence in the Second World War, Professor R.V. Jones's work on scientific intelligence, David Kahn's books, Ronald Lewin's books on MAGIC and ULTRA, and at least a dozen others. There have been some general reflections of interest and value, such as the six (so far) publications of the Washington-based Consortium for the Study of Intelligence, *Intelligence Requirements for the 1980's,* edited by Roy Godson. There have been biographical and autobiographical studies, some of great interest, others more problematical. But even the very best books on intelligence suffer from certain weaknesses that are probably inherent in the very subject. The British history of intelligence in World War II is weak on human intelligence (HUMINT). Indeed, it mentions virtually no individuals, only committees; the reader will look in vain in the 1,500 pages published so far for Cavendish-Bentinck, Stewart Menzies, Kell, or Jones—and these were, after all, the key figures in the whole story. The reason is not difficult to divine: There has been massive censorship, and even self-censorship, of sources pertaining to HUMINT. For similar reasons Professor Michael Howard's official history of deception in World War II has not been released for publication.

This, of course, is an old problem. Those who know what happened are usually subject to all kinds of restrictions. These restrictions are often exceedingly stupid and have not the slightest effect on keeping real secrets and preventing leakages, as they frequently concern matters that are well known in any case. William Hood's fine book, *The Mole,* published last year, deals with the affair of Major Popov in Vienna, the most important human source that U.S. intelligence had in the early 1950s. Mr. Hood does not give the name of Popov's American case officer, who plays a central role in the book. But the reader who turns to the work of a British author, Nigel

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

West's *The Circus: MI5 Operations, 1945–72,* also recently published, will learn that this was George Kisvalter, and he will read a good many things besides. As for the Russians, they did not have to wait for the publication of Nigel West's book, as they learned all these details from George Blake, their master spy in Berlin some twenty-five years ago.

Veils of Secrecy

Intelligence old-timers (to return to our theme) frequently tend to believe that only an insider can be trusted to tell the story as it really was, and there is a grain of truth in this. But knowledge is only one of the preconditions needed to write on yesteryear's events; another is detachment. There is no surfeit of this quality among those who were involved by necessity in all kinds of interagency (and intra-agency) controversies, quarrels, rivalries, and so on. Their ambitions were bound to be thwarted at one stage or another, and they usually have scores to settle. The belief that only an insider can say anything of relevance about any subject is a frequent phenomenon; it appears in all times and in many contexts. But the insider will seldom be free to write the whole truth and he cannot implicitly be trusted. The ideal observer was once compared (by Trotsky, I believe) to someone sitting on the wall of a besieged fortress, able to watch in detail events on both sides of the wall. But such ideal vantage posts seldom, if ever, exist in real life. Thus we shall have to make do in future, as in the past, with insiders, who tell us the truth but not the whole truth, and refight some of the old battles, and on the other hand with outsiders, such as academics, who are preoccupied with building theoretical models, or journalists, who write with hardly veiled prejudices or seek sensational revelations. And even those who try to steer clear of these pitfalls as much as possible cannot be certain that they have been able to penetrate the veil of secrecy.

There have been some authors in recent years who succeeded in penetrating the tabernacles of intelligence agencies (to quote David Kahn's phrase about James Bamford's book). But Mr. Bamford is concerned (mercifully) with technical systems, not with substance, and in the end the reader will not really be much wiser whether the National Security Agency is very important and the money allocated to it well spent or whether the intelligence collected is mostly low grade, the Russian general talking with his mistress in the Crimea, and the merchant from Singapore discussing business with his associate. There were such books not only in the United States. Nigel West's *The Circus: MI5* should be mentioned in this context. MI5 is the British counterintelligence agency (the security service), and Mr. West is a young British journalist who had previously written a history of its earlier days—from 1909 to the end of 1945. His first book contained not much of importance that was not known before. *The Circus,* on the other hand, contains quite a few revelations. The author must have received considerable assistance from some former member of the security service. Since it is known that there was a great deal of internal dissention in MI5, and since Mr. West's informants had, in all probability, more than a few axes to grind, it is not certain to what degree all the revelations can be trusted. Many of the details may be right; the overall picture could still be wrong.

Nigel West's book is relatively harmless, for the biases are not political but merely refer to the internal struggles in British intelligence. One faces the same syndrome in a far more acute form in much of American literature on intelligence of the 1970s. A good example is Thomas Power's book on the CIA and Richard Helms, *The Man Who Kept the Secrets.* One cannot but admire the industry of the author, digging out fact after the fact; and as far as an outsider can ascertain, he got many of his facts right. And yet the overall picture is distorted because the political context is largely nonexistent. It could well be that the reader of mass-market books on intelligence does not want to be unduly bothered with lengthy disquisitions about detente, the balance of power, Soviet foreign political conduct, and so on. Not for him such questions as whether America needs an intelligence agency in the first place, whether a secret service should be secret, whether a covert action capacity is needed or not. John Le Carré certainly would not dream about bringing in boring subjects of this kind, and there is no reason why he should. It is less obvious why one should be taking seriously those nonfiction books that do not address themselves to the crucial questions, however vexing. A plausible case can be made for the "Napoleon and the Women" kind of literature; they are entertaining and may even make a certain contribution to our knowledge of Napoleon. But since Napoleon did not enter history as a result of his achievements as a lover, these books will not be read for their comments on grand strategy. Most of this literature does not pretend to be more than it is, whereas the investigative journalist genre clearly has such ambitions. Journalists' usual practice is to establish to their own and possibly our satisfaction that a certain senior intelligence official engaged in some illegal activity or that he has been lying. This will be followed by some sanctimonious comments about the evils of secrecy and exhortations to stick to the basic values of our democratic society. Our journalist will then move on to his next assignment without having provided much guidance to the keepers of the secrets who have to conduct policy in an imperfect world, in which we are dealing not only with open democratic societies but also with those whose foreign affairs more often resemble the ethics of the jungle than the Sermon on the Mount.

A Harebrained Scheme

Sometimes the allegations are manifestly wrong. In his recent book on Henry Kissinger, Seymour Hersh writes that when Dr. Kissinger worked for the U.S. Army Counterintelligence Corps (CIC) after the Second World War, he was in a section recruiting Nazi intelligence officers for work in the Soviet bloc. But Dr. Kissinger left the army for Harvard in 1946, when the Communist takeover in most of Eastern Europe had not even taken place and there was no Soviet bloc. Furthermore, as Mr. Hersh could have learned from another recent book, John Loftus's *The Belarus Secret,* CIC, far from enlisting Nazi intelligence officers, was working hard to bring them to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

trial. The recruiting was done by the Office of Policy Coordination (OPC), at that time part of the State Department.

The Hersh case is obvious—the author clearly does not like Dr. Kissinger. Sometimes the problem is more complicated, as in the ugly story told by Mr. Loftus, a former Justice Department investigator, about the recruitment in 1948 by the State Department of a sizable group of Nazi sympathizers and collaborators who had been involved in the massacre of Jews and in other atrocities. Some were brought to the U.S., others were used for all kinds of "political action" programs in Eastern Europe. The scheme was harebrained. Frank Wisner, who originated it, should never have touched Kusiel, Jasiuk, Astrovskis, and the other chieftains of the East European underworld, even though in the postwar years there were a great many Nazis around and both sides competed in enlisting them—a fact that seems to have escaped Mr. Loftus. So far everything Mr. Loftus reports is perfectly correct, and his anger is more than justified. Even from a purely pragmatic point of view the scheme was doomed because the collaborators were deeply penetrated by Soviet security agents.

Once authenticity has been established, he still cannot be certain how important his discoveries are, how they fit into the general picture.

Frank Wisner was certainly an enthusiastic and energetic man. According to Mr. Loftus, he was a veteran practitioner of the black art of covert operations. In actual fact, he was a dilettante who at the time knew very little about either covert operations or Europe. He played a role of importance in the early history of the CIA but left after a nervous breakdown in the late 1950s. He had been active for OSS in the last year of the war in the Balkans. Operation Belarus was stupid and unforgivable. One wishes one could end here with a vote of thanks to Mr. Loftus for having uncovered a scandal that officialdom tried to hide for more than three decades.

But Mr. Loftus does not stop here. He goes off on various tangents, generalizing, drawing far-reaching conclusions, commenting on events and people of which he is clearly not qualified to comment—Soviet policies in Eastern Europe, Germany, and Russia; American reactions; the Cold War; the role of intelligence; covert action; intelligence oversight; and so on.

One illustration will have to suffice: Gustav Hilger, a German diplomat, is one of Mr. Loftus's chief villains. Another, incidentally, is George Kennan, who (we are told) served at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow from 1939 to 1941. Mr. Hilger, we learn, was the mastermind behind the Nazi designs, Hitler's personal Russian expert, and he first negotiated the Soviet-German treaty and later helped to plan the invasion of Russia.

Had Mr. Loftus done a minimum of homework, he would have known that Mr. Kennan served in Berlin, not Moscow, during those years, that Hilger was indeed a German diplomat (head of the trade mission in Moscow) and a key figure in the embassy, that he was a "Russlanddeutscher" (Russian German), who was more at home in Russia than in Germany, loved the country and took pride in it. He was a living encyclopedia on all things Russian and also a very naive man who thought very highly of Stalin. He never served as Hitler's adviser; Hitler called him "the Russian" and did not trust him. Far from preparing the invasion in 1941, he advocated German-Soviet rapprochement throughout his life and refused to believe up to the last moment that there would be war between his two beloved countries. He was a shattered man when the war eventually broke out.

For Mr. Loftus "Hilger" is a mere name—a file containing all kinds of notes and memoranda. But files seldom tell the whole story, and sometimes they can be misleading. To those familiar with the background they can tell a great deal, but they contain many pitfalls for everyone else. The author did stumble on some material that contained the essence of a genuine scandal. But he was in no position to judge. In some cases he pursued the clues contained in the files, and when he did so, he usually got his facts and the context right. But the moment he ventures beyond the material contained in his file—the Belarus collaborationists' mafia—into general pontifications ("The unlocking of the Belarus secret is not the end of the conspiracy. It is only the beginning.") he is out of his depth, and thus doubts are cast on the truth of his story in general, which is a pity because the basic points of the book are true.

Mr. Loftus cooperated with a professional writer to put his account into literary English. He should have hired instead a historian who could have provided some information about Soviet and American policies in Eastern Europe in the postwar years and the background on some of the persons who appear in the files he uncovered. Instead, the story is told out of the historical context, and the book is a hit-and-miss affair.

Fits of Absentmindedness

What has been said about *The Belarus Secret* is, in fact, a frequent phenomenon in the recent literature on war, intelligence, and sometimes also diplomacy. A writer, as a result of hard work or a lucky accident, comes across some interesting, hitherto untapped material. Naturally he wishes to make use of it, and the first step is to find out whether it is authentic. Once authenticity has been established, he still cannot be certain how important his discoveries are, how they fit into the general picture, whether his files and interviews give a full and objective account, or whether they are fragmentary and partisan. He usually has only a vague idea about the many people, things, and places that he found in his files. This is what happened to a German writer not long ago who thought that he had made an important discovery. He found the text of a cable of August 1939 from the U.S. Embassy in Moscow to the State Department, according to which the American ambassador, relying on an unnamed source in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the German embassy in the Soviet capital, knew the contents of the secret clauses of the Soviet-Nazi pact the very day it was signed. Since this pact led directly to the Nazi invasion of Poland and thus to the Second World War, this seemed a major revelation—Roosevelt obviously did know that war would break out presently, and through him presumably also Britain and perhaps even Poland were informed.

But the text of the cable had been known for decades; it had in fact been printed in the annual series of U.S. foreign policy documents. Furthermore, even the identity of the source had been known for a long time—it was "Johnny" Herwarth (who after the Second World War became a German ambassador) who had warned Charles Bohlen, and both men had told the story in their autobiographies. On the other hand, there is no evidence so far that Roosevelt was told by Cordell Hull, let alone that Roosevelt informed the British Prime Minister or anyone else. Sometimes even the most unimpeachable sources cannot be trusted. The fact that a certain story is mentioned in a document that is kept in an archive does not necessarily make it authentic. A recently declassified congressional hearing offers a good example. On June 27, 1947, Allen Dulles (whose name is given as "Mr. B." in the document) appeared as a witness before the House Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments. The issue at stake was the establishment of a Central Intelligence Agency, and Dulles reported his World War II experience. He was asked by Congressman Judd: Is it true that Admiral Canaris, the head of the German Abwehr, was your agent? Dulles replied that this was going a little too far. Canaris was not an agent, but he was certainly assisting Dulles mainly through General Oster, his chief of staff; about 10 percent of the Abwehr were involved.

This assertion, if true, would make the rewriting of the history of the Second World War mandatory. Allen Dulles was a truthful man, not given to idle boasting. Yet on this specific occasion his memory was clearly failing him, even though a mere three years had passed since the events to which he referred. There is no evidence that Canaris or Oster was assisting Dulles; Oster, in fact, lost his intelligence job a few months after Dulles's arrival in Europe. Dulles did have an agent in Zurich, Gisevius (who probably operated as a double agent), and possibly a second source, but certainly not 400 (this would have been 10 percent of the Abwehr total); and Canaris was far too cautious a man to establish contact with Dulles, even indirectly. Such contact would have resulted in intelligence of the highest order. But no such intelligence was forthcoming. Instead, there were complaints from Washington about the low quality of information received from Dulles in Bern, and this changed only after Kolbe, the German Foreign Ministry source, appeared on the scene. If so, what induced Dulles to make claims so remote from reality? Was it a fit of absentmindedness, a lapse in memory such as happens to most people at one time or another? Or was he perhaps misquoted, and he did not bother to read the transcript before it became part of the public record? We do not know.

There is less, much less, to the Canaris connection than meets the eye, and the history of the Second World War will not have to be rewritten. True, there still are some loose ends facing the student of wartime intelligence, but there is only one major riddle, and this concerns the *Rote Drei* in Switzerland. There have been many books and articles about "Lucy," Rudolph Roessler, the German emigré who never left Lucerne and yet supplied some very important information to the Russians. All kinds of ingenious theories and interpretations have been mooted; none seem convincing or even plausible. I have provided my own surmises in the *London Times Literary Supplement*. The only possible explanation is that Roessler received his information, or most of it, from Swiss sources; there was a Swiss connection with the German army supreme command and also with the Abwehr—the Viking Line. But the Swiss have announced that it would not be in the national interest to reveal their German sources, and there, one suspects, affairs will rest, at least for a long time to come.

Not to come to grief, the prospector in this minefield has to be familiar with the literature already published. To give a true and balanced picture, he has to read a great deal around his subject. Some of the material may be available only in languages with which he is not familiar. It is a major effort, and not everyone is willing to undertake it. But if such precautionary measures are not taken, books like *A Man Called Intrepid* and *Bodyguard of Lies* result. The critics were harsh, and not without cause; reasonably good entertainment, they said, but quite unreliable. The authors were probably not unduly shaken, and substantial royalties provided some comfort.

Following *Bodyguard of Lies,* Mr. Brown wrote another book, *On a Field of Red*. This history of the world from 1917 to 1945, with special reference to the Communist International and based apparently on intelligence (or police) files found in the personal archives of General Donovan, was a disaster. It was a by-product of Mr. Brown's biography of the founder and head of OSS. It contained virtually nothing of interest to anyone reasonably familiar with this period; what was new in this book was doubtful. It was the kind of stuff that gives intelligence a bad name, for readers will argue, and not without reason, that if this is the quality of information produced by our intelligence agencies, why spend money on them? The subscription fees to half a dozen good newspapers and periodicals are much less expensive.

Squeezing the Facts

Wild Bill Donovan—The Last Hero is a different proposition. There have been of late other books on the subject, but Richard Dunlop did not have Donovan's personal papers at his disposal, and Thomas Troy dealt only with one specific issue, the transition from OSS to CIA. The life of this last hero (Eisenhower's words) has all the ingredients of a best-seller—outstanding football player, the most highly decorated U.S. soldier in World War I, famous lawyer, politician, and a man with friends in the right places, Roosevelt's special emissary, and lastly head of OSS. The book is far more reliable than *Bodyguard of Lies*. The manuscript was read ("in its penultimate form," we are told) by, among others, J. J. An-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

gleton, William Casey, Henry Hyde, William Colby, Franklin Canfield, and David Donovan—an impressive lineup.

The great merit of the book is that the author sticks closely to his sources—the Donovan archives—which contain much detail that is new. The impression that emerges is that Donovan did his job well, that he spent as much time and energy fighting his bureaucratic rivals in Washington as fighting the Germans and the Japanese, and that although OSS was much more glamorous, ULTRA and MAGIC were infinitely more important for the conduct of the war. OSS had one important agent on the European mainland—Fritz Kolbe of the German Foreign Ministry—and this only toward the end of the war, when the importance of intelligence had declined. All the rest was chaff or the result of patient research by the backroom boys in Washington. The quality of background intelligence produced was, in fact, impressive, but this does not figure prominently in the book.

. . . a substantial part of intelligence nonfiction also is not mimetic but takes very considerable liberties with reality.

One of the weaknesses of *Donovan* is careless writing; another, lack of background knowledge. What is one to make of an identification like, "William J. Casey, who as a younger man had been Donovan's chief of secret intelligence in Europe"? The author surely knows that Mr. Casey had no such title or assignment. Or a sentence that begins, "While Donovan was not a great innovator in the world of secret service—he does not compare with Menzies and Gubbins of England or with Trotsky and Dzerzhinsky of Russia . . ."? Both Menzies and Gubbins were anything but innovators in the field of intelligence. Trotsky had nothing to do with it in the first place, and Dzerzhinsky was preoccupied with the Bolsheviks' rivals at home. Mr. Brown surely did not want to say that his hero was an utter failure, but what *did* he want to say?

Above all, he has an unrivalled faculty for conjuring up irrelevant anecdotes, usually at great length. Mysterious crooks from the demimonde of international intrigue suddenly appear—the Djangaroff and the David Zagha and their ilk, fabulously rich and well connected. Suspense is built up; the reader is prepared for the worst; and then he faces an anticlimax—the sinister men suddenly vanish, usually in Latin America, and it is never made clear why these pointless stories had to be told in the first place. Whole chapters in this book are devoted to abortive or insignificant operations, and though the author is more or less at home with American and British affairs—or was shielded from committing major mistakes by the readers of his manuscript—he is on much shakier ground when dealing with foreign affairs, be they German, East European, or Turkish. There were, as is widely known, various conspiracies against Hitler, yet there was never an all-embracing Canaris Conspiracy, as Mr. Brown claims—the "Black Orchestra." Yet it figures in this book from beginning to end. The story that OSS activities in the Balkans had anything to do with Hitler's decision to invade Hungary in 1944 is sheer fantasy, and there are many more such exaggerations of the importance and the consequences of OSS activities in southern East Europe and elsewhere. There is little or nothing about OSS in the Far East, perhaps reflecting the lack of material in the archives. Nevertheless, *Donovan* includes essential material and ought to be read.

The starting point of these reflections was that much, probably most, of the fictional accounts on intelligence are not mimetic but have only a tenuous relationship with reality. It was then argued that a substantial part of intelligence nonfiction also is not mimetic but takes very considerable liberties with reality. Some of the reasons are obvious: The fog of uncertainty is frequently difficult to penetrate; reality is often unexciting; a great deal of ingenuity and daring may go into operations that produce little or nothing of real significance; and even if some important information is eventually collected, there is no guarantee whatsoever that political use can or will be made of it. All this is dispiriting. The men and women of intelligence may not be able to do anything about it, but the authors can make their choice if reality is unexciting—hence the embellishment, the selective treatment, the squeezing of facts, and so on.

There are other reasons, and an essay published in the Winter 1983 issue of *Foreign Policy* magazine provides an excellent exhibit. *Foreign Policy* is a respected quarterly of political, economic and strategic affairs; it is known to have published cartoons in the past, but not, to the best of my knowledge, poetry, fiction, science fiction, or drama. The article, written by James A. Nathan, a professor of political science at the University of Delaware, is entitled "Dateline Australia, America's Foreign Watergate?" Its thesis is as startling as it is disturbing. The CIA had brought down the Australian Labor government in 1975 because it feared that Australia under Gough Whitlam would somehow get Bolshie or that, at the very least, the U.S. would lose its electronic monitory facilities in that continent. This, if true, is a matter of utmost gravity, a case of open interference in the domestic affairs of an ally, and a democratic country at that.

The Rumor Factory

Mr. Nathan made it quite clear that it was not just a matter of America taking a dim view of Mr. Whitlam's conduct of affairs—Mr. Whitlam, after all, was not an ardent admirer of Washington. No, it was a matter of action, of big sums of money changing hands, of drug traffic, and so on. In short, a political scoop of very major proportions. The story had only one minor weakness: There was no evidence. Mr. Nathan disarmingly said that he was doing no more than developing a "plausible case" that CIA people may have been doing certain things, and he later told *Time* magazine (which devoted a whole page to the story) that he heard a great many rumors and allegations while teaching in Australia and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that his account was simply an agnostic's report on the case the believers were making in Australia.

There is no reason to doubt Mr. Nathan's words. There must have been rumors and allegations, for there are always rumors and allegations, especially about the CIA, and if perchance there should for once be no such rumors, there is nothing easier than starting them.

What does it prove? It may be easy to make a plausible case (based on many allegations) that Professor Nathan has secretly developed a new theory of relativity or that he has been composing symphonies equal in grandeur only to Beethoven, unbeknownst even to his closest friends and family. But it is unlikely that *Foreign Policy* would accept such an article, however closely reasoned, for publication, nor would *Time* magazine devote a page to the story. They would, quite properly, wish to verify the story, and they would not be satisfied until the case was established beyond any reasonable doubt. And even then they might decide not to publish the story for, well, editorial reasons.

The elements of fantasy are very much in appearance in the literature on intelligence. The methods of intelligence collection have come to resemble science fiction, and the writing about intelligence shows a similar resemblance. But there is one important difference: Science fiction does not aspire to be anything but science fiction, whereas not a few of the allegedly documentary books on intelligence are moving from fact to fiction and back, changing from one literary genre to another in a way of which Aristotle would not have approved, and which, though occasionally entertaining, is bound to cause confusion and distortion.

Walter Laqueur

Credits for photos in order of appearance: George C. Marshall Foundation; Museum of Modern Art.

Intellectual Meltdown

The Nuclear Barons. *By Peter Pringle and James Spigelman. (Holt, Rinehart and Winston) $4.95 paperback.*

The War against the Atom. *By Samuel McCracken. (Basic Books) $18.50.*

In light of the mounting body of evidence against their claims, the continued fervor of the antinuclear movement brings to mind a little vignette about James Thurber's grandmother that he included in one of his short stories. The dear woman apparently had never reconciled herself to the invention of electricity, which she contended was "dripping invisibly all over the house" from empty sockets. Nothing could dissuade her from this position, and Thurber reports his grandmother occupying much of her time screwing light bulbs into these sockets, in hopes of plugging up the dangerous leaks. It is a marvelously drawn sketch, revealing the peculiar habit mankind has of preferring old vices to new virtues.

The sketch is not without its element of truth, either: Though often forgotten today, the advent of electricity, like the railroads before it, was accompanied by considerable fear and opposition; as the physicist William G. Pollard notes, "it was a new way of dying." Never mind that overall it was much safer and more efficient than the status quo. Quite simply, men fear most what they don't understand, and it takes them some time to put new dangers in perspective. Today, for example, few people worry about all the dangers and hazards involved in the mining and processing of coal—lung cancer, pollution, mining accidents, etc.—though it is far more of a health hazard than nuclear energy. While we have accepted coal with all its problems and dangers, nuclear power seems frightening, an image of the silent brooding reactors at Three Mile Island, associated with ominous-sounding words like "meltdown," "radiation," "plutonium,"

[It] is the story of perfidious "nuclear zealots" engaged in an attempt to foist unsafe nuclear energy . . . on an innocent and unsuspecting world.

"hydrogen bubble," "thermonuclear explosion," and so on. Who is to say that our grandchildren won't find our fears quaint and superstitious?

Indeed, we shall be lucky if they are able to think so, because there is an even greater chance—in this country, at least—that the protests over nuclear energy will result in our foregoing of this vital source, a protest that has gained momentum after the 1979 accident at Three Mile Island. Two fairly recent books on the issue, differing in both substance and tone, are almost perfect examples of the way this debate has been shaping up. The first is Peter Pringle and James Spigelman's *The Nuclear Barons,* a popular history of the age that begins with the origins of the Manhattan Project and concludes with a dour analysis of Three Mile Island. Though the authors—one a journalist and the other a lawyer—make a minor stab at explaining some of the fundamentals of nuclear power, and though at various points they try to distance themselves from the more radical (and sometimes violent) wings of the antinuclear movement, they nonetheless display a marked preference for the *ad hominem.* On the second page of their prologue, for instance, we learn what to expect as we are informed that "atomic bombs were built to demonstrate national manhood." The resulting work that follows is the story of perfidious "nuclear zealots" engaged in an attempt to foist unsafe nuclear energy (and by implication, nuclear weaponry) on an innocent and unsuspecting world.

Bridging the Gap

Samuel McCracken's *The War against the Atom,* by contrast, is fairly typical of the other side: calm, rational, and deliberate, tediously analyzing claims and coun-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

terclaims. Though not himself a scientist, Mr. McCracken notes that with very few exceptions—and there are one or two like Drs. John Gofman and Ernest Sternglass—the debate over nuclear energy lines up between the nuclear and radiation specialists who favor it, and the laymen and scientists from other specialties who oppose it. This dichotomy helps explain why nuclear apologetics tend to be dry, heavy academic tomes that make little impact on the population at large, while the antinuclear productions (including novels and films like *The China Syndrome*) are highly popular and commercially successful. Mr. McCracken's book is an attempt to bridge this gap, and his style is perhaps best indicated by his opening chapter, entitled "Some Technical Background," where he explains the basics of nuclear energy. "From here on in," he wryly notes at the chapter's end, "all is in dispute."

If . . . nuclear power is the most dangerous thing ever to hit the earth, then surely by now there already would have been some great disaster . . .

These early explanations are essential to clearing away much of the mystery, and corresponding suspicion, clouding nuclear power. Oversimplified, nuclear power is the result of the splitting of the atom (fission), causing a chain reaction of other splits that generates a massive release of energy. As Mr. McCracken explains,

> A nuclear power plant of the type now being built or scheduled to be built in this country uses the chain reaction as a source of heat to make steam to operate turbines that spin generators. That is, except for the reactor itself, a nuclear power plant is much like a coal- or oil-fired one.

In other words, the essential difference is in the original source of energy. Looked at narrowly, there is a tendency to view fossil fuels—coal, gas, oil, etc.—as natural and nuclear energy as alien or artificial. Actually, nuclear energy is the dominant energy of our universe, the basis of the sun, the stars, most of our solar system. What scientists have done is not create a new source of energy; rather, they have discovered the secret of producing an ancient source directly, man imitating nature. Like all knowledge, there are dangers as well as benefits to be derived. Like all knowledge, too, once discovered it is, for better or worse, impossible to bury.

Had the authors of *The Nuclear Barons* ever considered the atom in this light, the result assuredly would have been a most edifying and interesting book. Certainly such a popular history would be most welcome; certainly too it was well within their capabilities. In their more realistic moments, Messrs. Pringle and Spigelman recognize that knowledge cannot be reversed, that all the world's nations will never agree to forget about nuclear energy, but this does not lead them to stress the peaceful applications. To the contrary, from beginning to end the authors stick doggedly to their thesis that nuclear power plants lead directly to nuclear bombs, though in fact no bomb to date has been invented this way, and for good reason: There are cheaper and more efficient ways of doing it.

From their belief that the atom is inherently evil, it is a short step to the corollary that the whole pronuclear side is dominated by a profit-hungry cabal of fanatics. This unfortunate and immature attitude permeates every nook and cranny of their work: Colonel Leslie Grove, director of the Manhattan Project, is introduced as "pompous" and "portly"; they note that Karl Winnacker, leading nuclear proponent in Germany, was born in "the heartland of the most provincial, puritanical, and bigoted element of German Protestantism"; the Indian leader Homi Bhabha's quest to bring nuclear power to his country is attributed to "personal egoism"; Edward Teller, we learn, was possessed of "a deep phobia about communism"; and on and on, almost without exception. In sharp contrast, someone like Friends of the Earth member Amory Lovins is "energetic and earnest." Thus antinuclear activists, whose expertise is usually outside the nuclear field, act always in the public interest; pronuclear scientists never do. Reading *The Nuclear Barons* is akin to a trip to a grade-B cowboy movie of the fifties, so clearly are the black-hatted villains distinguished from the white-hatted good guys.

In the end, it is difficult to know what to gather from this book: Are the authors saying that nuclear energy is in the hands of evil powermongers who will stop at nothing? Are they saying that nuclear energy is so dangerous and unpredictable that it will cause a great holocaust? Or, are they merely saying that nuclear energy has its drawbacks?

If the authors are making the first point, then it appears that there is little we can do about it; we may be able to control to some degree nuclear power and weapons in the United States, but we cannot control the rest of the world. If, however, their point is that nuclear power is the most dangerous thing ever to hit the earth, then surely by now there already would have been some great disaster involving a fantastic loss of lives. But if by chance they are merely suggesting that nuclear power is dangerous—just as fires, cars, planes, and dams are—then they are not telling us anything we don't already know.

TMI vs. Color TV

What is missing from this book, and from many antinuclear arguments, is a touchstone, a standard, a way of making reasoned decisions. When we say that nuclear power is dangerous, it is necessary to ask the following question: *compared to what?* In debating energy policy in the United States, nuclear critics are wont to compare the hazards of "going nuclear" with the unsupported and cheery promises of a bright solar future. Dangerous or not, such problems as radiation, waste disposal, storage, and so on can be dealt with only insofar as they are measured against existing—not blackboard—alternatives. This is exactly the sort of realistic, critical compari-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

son that is absent from the pages of *The Nuclear Barons*.

The War against the Atom, on the other hand, is filled with such comparisons. While Mr. McCracken recognizes that it is true that "there is no known safe level of radiation," we learn that the human body is itself radioactive, that we are constantly exposed to radiation by where we live (Denverites receive from background radiation 5,000 nuclear plants' worth of radiation more than their fellow citizens in Palm Springs), that a person living by a nuclear power plant receives less radiation from the plant than he does from his color TV. We also learn that the elements with a long half-life are dangerous only when they start to disintegrate and break up—not in between. Chapter by chapter, Mr. McCracken puts the charges against nuclear energy in the perspective of a society that already takes significantly worse risks for granted, elucidating his concepts with analogies and in terms the layman can understand.

One of the best sections deals with Three Mile Island. If there is one point that Messrs. Pringle and Spigelman grasped clearly, it is their observation that "information is not assurance for the public." All during the accident—caused by a faulty water pump and some stuck valves in the cooling system—the national media featured sensational stories about the possibility of a meltdown, a hydrogen explosion, radiation deaths, etc.—usually accompanied by a photo or film clip of the large, mysterious reactors. The most serious danger was said to be the meltdown, an irreversible melting of the reactor fuel that would occur if the reactor core became too hot. Talk of a "partial meltdown," notes Mr. McCracken, is nonsense: by its nature it is either full or nonexistent.

Prior to the accident, there was a general consensus among scientists that a meltdown would inevitably ensue "if the core of a recently shut-down reactor were to be uncovered for more than a few minutes." But at Three Mile Island, the core was uncovered for several *hours*, and still no meltdown. Apparently, the scientists and engineers had underestimated the cooling effects of steam, for the core temperature never even came close to the meltdown point of 5,000 degrees (at its highest, it reached about 3,000 degrees). As for the radiation leaks that set off so many headlines, in the worst (hypothetical) case the dose would have amounted to the equivalent of two chest x-rays, the difference, incidently, between the background exposure of New Orleans and Denver. "That needs to be appreciated," writes Mr. McCracken. "A resident of New Orleans offered a choice between a year in Denver or five days on the banks of the Susquehanna, staring at Three Mile Island, would be well advised to spend his time in Pennsylvania."

Fear-Mongering

As for the hydrogen bubble, the author points out that there was never enough oxygen inside for an explosion. What Three Mile Island really proved was that this particular design of light-water reactor (the most common kind of reactor in the United States) was *safer* than was previously thought. Indeed, the Kemeny Commission, assigned by President Carter to investigate the accident, concluded that even had there been a meltdown, the containment structure, designed to withstand the crash of a jet plane, would have prevented radiation from escaping; that is, a meltdown would have been contained. The only bad health effect the commission could find in the residents of the area was "severe mental stress." This is the bitter irony of Three Mile Island: Though it in fact proved the reactor safer than before, the public's perception was just the opposite. They thought, or they now think, nuclear power more dangerous than before.

A great deal of the blame, or credit, for this public perception ought properly to go to leaders of the anti-nuclear movement, who have compiled an amazing history of distortion, half-truths, and outright fear-mongering. Leaders like Ralph Nader, Helen Caldicott, John Gofman, Barry Commoner, Ernest Sternglass can easily make headlines with wild charges (Dr. Caldicott is fond of speeches describing babies undergoing grisly deaths due to radiation emitted from nuclear power plants) and dubious figures, for it is far easier to frighten people than to reassure them. Even though there is no dearth of statistics and professional studies demonstrating just how safe and important nuclear energy is, by and large these have the same impact as the small boxes newspapers devote to the corrections, long after the damage of the headline is done. One has only to consider the mileage the Union of Concerned Scientists—a direct-mail operation whose directors are not even scientists and whose ranks anyone willing to part with a $15 fee may join—gets out of their name; no number of corrections or explanations can counter their initial input.

"How many miners are you willing to have die by opting for coal? No subtleties or evasions about solar power, please, just the number."

What nuclear advocates must do is what Mr. McCracken begins to do in the second half of his book: take the lead, attack. For now, there is no better issue than coal. Even nuclear opponents concede that at the moment our only option is coal—ironically, one of the first targets of the environmentalist movement. In a direct comparison with nuclear energy, coal loses on almost every count: It produces far more waste, generally dumped into the atmosphere; it leaves huge scars upon the land; it kills many more people; and—surprise—"it is one of life's little ironies that the typical coal-fired plant has a level of radioactive emission greater than that allowed for a nuclear plant." Various professional health organizations like the American Medical Association, the California Medical Association, and the Health Physics Society have endorsed nuclear power for reducing the health hazards of energy.

But the most effective front on which to argue is deaths. The most damning fact about coal is that for

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

equal units of electricity produced, the ratio of deaths caused by coal-fired as opposed to nuclear plants is, Mr. McCracken estimates, between 60 and 225 to 1. It is an amazing figure, meaning that each time we put off a nuclear power plant for a coal plant, we are in fact sentencing several men to death. Years ago, Ralph Nader was given to ask: "How many nuclear plants are you willing to have explode? No subtleties, please, just the number." Today, it would be more accurate to turn that question around, and address it to Mr. Nader himself: "How many miners are you willing to have die by opting for coal? No subtleties or evasions about solar power, please, just the number."

Though reason usually outs in the end, in the short term, when crucial decisions affecting the future must be made, it is too often absent. Given the body of evidence we are faced with, it seems fair to say with the scientists, that fears of nuclear energy are, by and large, irrational. They are irrational not because there is *no* danger, but because given our other risks and its inherent probabilities, its relative risks are small while its relative merits are great. We do not, for instance, spend our time worrying about jets crashing into ballparks, though this too is a possible danger. Our suspicions about nuclear energy, in fact, are not far removed from Mrs. Thurber's reservations about electricity. We have drawn up regulations, taken many precautions, all to ensure that nuclear energy is as safe as the experts claim it is. "It is a standard of safety so demanding," notes Mr. McCracken, "that only a nuclear reactor can hope to meet it."

William McGurn

Southern Reproaches

A Band of Prophets: The Vanderbilt Agrarians after Fifty Years. *Edited by William C. Havard and Walter Sullivan. (Louisiana State University Press, 1982.) $12.95.*

I'll Take My Stand: The South and the Agrarian Tradition. *By Twelve Southerners. New introduction by Louis D. Rubin, Jr.; biographical essays by Virginia Rock. (Louisiana State University Press, 1982.) $6.95.*

Christian humanism, stern criticism of the industrialized mass society, detestation of communism and other forms of collectivism, and attachment to the ways of the Old South were the principles uniting the twelve "Southern Agrarians" who published *I'll Take My Stand* five decades ago. Their twelve essays were approved by T. S. Eliot and some other reflective people when they were published; yet for the most part, the Agrarians met with hostility and ridicule. Today many may read their book with greater understanding and sympathy.

Professors Havard and Sullivan at Vanderbilt University (the center for the Twelve Southerners) have put together a collection of six critical essays (plus interesting discussions and notes) by writers friendly toward the Agrarians. Also there has been published a new edition of *I'll Take My Stand* (which has gone through various editions and printings, though often out of print during the past five decades), with a new introduction by Louis Rubin.

The Twelve Southerners possessed poetic vision. As Dr. Rubin summarizes their principles, their book

> is a rebuke to materialism, a corrective to the worship of Progress, and a reaffirmation of man's aesthetic and spiritual needs. And because the South has come so late into the industrial world, it appeals to the lingering memory within the Southerner's mind of the tranquil and leisurely Southern life that existed before the machines and superhighways came. As such the book constitutes both a reminder and a challenge. *What are you losing that you once possessed?* it says to the modern Southerner. *Are you quite sure that you want to discard it entirely?*

All but three of the original Agrarians have died: Robert Penn Warren, Andrew Nelson Lytle, and Lyle Lanier. The others were Allen Tate, Herman C. Nixon, John Crowe Ransom, Donald Davidson, John Donald Wade, John Gould Fletcher, Stark Young, Henry Blue Kline, and Frank Owsley. The most resolute of them all was Donald Davidson, professor of English at Vanderbilt and author of many good books, a masterful essayist and one of the better American poets. (I rank him with Eliot and Frost.) In my file I find a score of letters to me from Professor Davidson. He begins the earliest of them (August 31, 1954) as follows:

> Living in Nashville and teaching at Vanderbilt University is very hard on a Southern Agrarian, I can assure you. It is, in fact, nothing but warfare, and we couldn't survive very long without some place to lick our wounds for a while.

(He wrote this from Ripton, Vermont, to which place he and his wife retreated every summer, taking pains to avoid New York City en route.)

The Twelve Prophets, as Davidson's letter suggests, were without honor at Vanderbilt for some years. As George Core mentions in his essay "Agrarianism, Criticism, and the Academy" (in *A Band of Prophets*), Vanderbilt's administration disparaged the Agrarians and, in effect, would not accept Davidson's and Allen Tate's papers as a gift. The climate of opinion there seems to have altered recently: *A Band of Prophets* results from a formal Vanderbilt conference held in honor of the Agrarians.

> Seven cities now contend for Homer dead,
> Through which the living Homer begged his bread.

For that matter, the literate South generally neglected these Agrarians, the most illustrious of southern sons, in their own time. Only when New York paid attention to Tate, Warren, Ransom, Young, and others did the South perk up its ears.

Despite the attention the Agrarian writers obtained nationally, it was often not easy for them to get their writings published—or, if published, to keep them in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

print. In 1938 Donald Davidson published *The Attack on Leviathan* in stern opposition to political and cultural centralization. (Mr. Core calls it Davidson's best book.) I read it when I was an undergraduate that year at Michigan State, and mightily impressed, I took it that Davidson's readers must be numbered in the hundreds of thousands. Years later Davidson wondered that I ever had come upon his *Leviathan,* and in a letter dated June 10, 1955, he explained to me why few copies of his book still existed:

> I now own the copyright; it was assigned to me by the University of North Carolina Press, just a few years ago, after Lambert Davis came in as editor of the Press—and after I had had a terrific row with him. I was assured by my lawyer that I had grounds for a suit against the Press, but I did not have the money to carry the suit through. When Bill Couch [editor of that Press in 1938] printed the book, he left some hundreds of copies in sheets, to be bound up as demand might occur. During the interim, after Couch left and before Davis came in, a man named Wilson filled in as editor. He undertook to "clear the stock room," and since the *Leviathan* had not been selling in quantity, he "pulped" the stock of my book that was in sheets, and so, in effect, put the book out of print, since only a few bound copies remained. But he did not notify me before taking this action and give me the opportunity to buy the stock, as the contract required the publisher to do. Furthermore, I discovered that the Press was withholding from me fees for reprint permission—quite an accumulation of them, it happened—and I had to come down hard on them to get the money that was due me. It was obvious to me that the book was being in effect "suppressed," and though Lambert Davis, Wilson's successor, protested that was not so, I knew very well that if the book had been "liberal" or "radical," rather than "conservative," it would have been kept in print, or would have been reprinted, for it was continually being cited and was in some demand. Davis, by the way, in an interview he had with me in Nashville, had the gall to explain to me that he was a "Christian Socialist."

Too true. Despite the genuine conservatism of most of the Agrarians (Tate having the intrepidity to publish his *Reactionary Essays),* and such tactics employed against them as the pulping that Davidson describes, their high talents as men of letters in the long run gave them ascendancy over the realm of humane letters, even in Manhattan—a domination that endured until recent years, when it was overthrown by the squalid oligarchs of the *New York Review of Books.* John Crowe Ransom later lapsed into a rather dull liberalism, but as a group, the Agrarians illustrated wondrously well the remark made by Lionel Trilling in 1950 that the twentieth-century writers possessed of imagination distinctly were not liberal.

Brutal Buffeting

The Twelve Southerners knew that the South would change. As Stark Young put it in the final paragraph of *I'll Take My Stand,*

> That a change is now in course all over the South is plain; and it is as plain that the South changing must be the South still, remembering that for no thing can there be any completeness that is outside its own nature, and no thing for which there is any advance save in its own kind. If this were not so, all nature by now would have dissolved in chaos and folly, nothing in it . . .

Yet the South's pace of change has been more rapid and overwhelming than even the gloomiest of the twelve expected. Old Nashville has been thoroughly demolished and uglified, Strickland's capitol on its hill besieged by the haughty office towers of state and federal bureaucracy. Davidson lamented to me when I spoke at Vanderbilt in 1955 that the campus had been converted into metered parking lots. Architectural continuity has been broken in the southern states; never again, presumably, will there be southern architectural styles. Much else has gone by the board.

. . . Agrarians illustrated wondrously well the remark . . . that the twentieth-century writers possessed of imagination distinctly were not liberal.

With the dwindling of a distinctive Dixieland has come relative economic prosperity. Even so oldfangled a place as Farmville, in Southside Virginia, one of the two most distinctively southern regions of the South (the other being middle Tennessee), is bustling and almost affluent compared with what it was only two decades ago. The agricultural pattern of existence, which the Agrarians praised, still endures here and there south of Mason's and Dixon's line, but it has been brutally buffeted during the past fifty years.

Andrew Lytle, a hard hater of a consolidated industrialized and urbanized society, is eighty years old now—and still in arms against the New South. His contribution to *I'll Take My Stand,* "The Hind Tit," remains a realistic and persuasive sketch of the healthiness of southern life before the "good roads" commenced the destruction of the old rural pattern. Since he wrote, the welfare state has done its best to wipe out, as impoverished and culturally deprived, such survivals of southern vitality.

To wipe out southerners of the type of Lytle and Davidson may be more difficult. Modernity is doing its best to accomplish such liquidation by sweeping away—in the South and elsewhere—the sort of schooling that such men as Lytle and Davidson profited by.

Tide what may betide, the Southern Agrarians will loom large in histories of American thought and letters. With liberalism in America now nearly mindless, some of the rising generation may find in *I'll Take My Stand* an understanding of personal and social order far removed from desiccated liberal attitudes.

Russell Kirk

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mothers, Fathers, and Other Subversives

The Subversive Family: An Alternative History of Love and Marriage. *By Ferdinand Mount. (Jonathan Cape, London, 1982) £9.50.*

The assault on the family is over. But there remains a vacuum for a new and more realistic understanding of this most fundamental of all social institutions, its history, its role, and its future. The publication of *The Subversive Family: An Alternative History of Love and Marriage* by a British social historian, Ferdinand Mount, is thus particularly opportune and deserves special attention. With this boldly conceived and brilliantly argued volume we have for the first time a powerful version of the family that counters those theories and perceptions that have dominated the public arena for all too long.

The literature on the family, contends Mr. Mount, is "marked by manipulation, dishonesty and sophistry." The history of the family has to be rewritten "from the inside looking outwards," that is, in terms of what ordinary people like to do, not in terms of what they were expected and compelled to do by those who happened to be in a position of control. The formidable bibliography on the subject that has accumulated through the centuries has been informed by assumptions fundamentally hostile to the family, says Mr. Mount. The contemporary media—the newspapers, magazines, and television, all the different organs of this immense apparatus of persuasion—continue that tradition, flaunting and at times even celebrating a pervasively negative image of family life. In spite of the most recent, albeit reluctant, recognition of the family's staying power, much of what the established contemporary texts tell us about ourselves and our history is little more than a rehash of defunct theories and gross misperceptions.

Mired in Muddle

The author takes issue with this whole body of literature. He does not hesitate to question entire traditions of interpretation—those of the Christian churches, of Marxists, and of their allies—nor does he shrink from taking to task such revered figures as Philippe Ariès and C. S. Lewis. In exploring the reasons why so many of them have misread and muddled the historical evidence, Mount proves himself to be a historian of considerable erudition. In the tradition of the British historian Peter Laslett, he turns to original data, using such sources as parish records, diaries, memoirs, and chronicles. He consults not only well-known writers like Plutarch, Erasmus, Chaucer, and Locke but also less familiar ones, such as the twelfth-century Abbess Hildegard and the Renaissance writer Sebastian Brant. By looking at the family from the inside, in uncovering the meanings family customs and practices held for the individuals themselves, Mr. Mount arrives at a multitude of insights, startling at first, frequently convincing, always intriguing. In a grand sweep, he attempts to bring to light the varying presuppositions underlying the writings of historians, theologians, philosophers, sociologists, and in short, all those whose theories have become part and parcel of the standard public perception of the family. In exposing them as myths, he develops a powerful alternative history of love and marriage extending from antiquity to the more grotesque events of recent times.

Because of the surprising novelty of his message, it may be useful to illustrate how his particular approach leads to interpretations that challenge the accepted wisdom. A few examples will have to suffice.

The Troubadour Trap

It has been accepted for some time that marriage for love as an act of free choice between the betrothed is a peculiarly modern phenomenon and that the "sentimental revolution" of the eighteenth century only slowly gained strength and validity. Conservatives and radicals alike are guided by the conventional historian's picture of the terrifying strictures imposed upon individuals, particularly women, by marriages arranged for purposes of procreation and the transmission of property. But Mr. Mount demonstrates that in the Middle Ages love had a central role in marriage, hence the preponderance of common law marriage. Using parish and church court records from sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England, medieval correspondence, a fresh look at *The Canterbury Tales,* diaries from the seventeenth century, and instructive tales from the fourteenth, he arrives at the conclusion that love and marriage were intertwined and that "marriage was a central experience in the life of every human being and the end of marriage . . . was likely to prove a desolating event."

Likewise, the notion that romantic love is a modern phenomenon invented by the troubadours—a theory equally celebrated by such diverse writers as Stendahl, Friedrich Engels, and C. S. Lewis—is declared a myth. Citing a wide range of examples from ancient Egypt, the anonymous graffiti on the walls of Pompeii, medieval Byzantium, and Caucasia to Icelandic poetry of the tenth century, Mr. Mount concludes that romantic love certainly predates the troubadours by centuries. At fault in the conceptualization and the persistence of the troubadour myth, he argues, is historians' inability to distinguish between social history and literary history.

As a last example of Mr. Mount's approach, let me mention briefly his treatment of Philippe Ariès's influential *Centuries of Childhood*—a book that has been particularly dear to my heart. Philippe Ariès studied images as conveyed in paintings, sculptures, dress, games, and education to discover how people thought and felt about marriage and children and came to his pathbreaking theory, one that subsequently influenced a whole generation of scholars, that both the concept of the family and the idea of childhood were modern inventions. Unknown in the Middle Ages, Ariès maintained, both originated in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and reached their full expression in the seventeenth. Again, taking a wide range of materials, many used by Ariès himself, Mr. Mount challenges the assumption that childhood and the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nuclear family are recent inventions. He argues that Ariès confused the history of childhood with the history of art. Whether one is convinced by this counterinterpretation or not, the fact remains that any serious scholar will have to come to terms with the challenge to current theories about the modern family.

A Sermon for Bachelors

The family, Mr. Mount asserts, is a subversive institution. It is an autonomous, natural, and moral entity, an institution in its own rights. It elicits from individuals an emotional intensity, a degree of commitment and loyalty, and an inescapable duty that brings it into direct collision with other institutions, such as the Church, the state, and by extension, any fraternal institution that competes for the individual's allegiance. Throughout history the family has been in a constant tug-of-war with external institutions. These natural enemies of the family never cease trying to bring it under their control.

Contrary to the popular wisdom of radicals, feminists, liberationists, and moderates, the relationship between the Christian church and the family has been marked by a high degree of ambiguity. At the very heart of the Christian vision of life is a tendency to elevate Christian asceticism and the ideal of celibacy over marriage, dedication to spouses, parents, and children. The Sermon on the Mount, says the author, "is a wonderful, intoxicating sermon. But it is a sermon for bachelors." And although there have been repeated attempts—by, for example, Thomas Aquinas—to integrate the family within the church, this fundamental ambivalence toward the family persists into our time. The church itself these days is challenged from within by radicals, feminists, and homosexuals, who rail against the intermeshing of church and family. But Mr. Mount reviews declarations of various denominations—Church of England, Roman Catholic, Methodist, Baptist—and says, "if we compare the tolerance and compassion extended here to homosexuals and adulterers and the *intolerance* towards those who put their families first, it becomes clear that the underlying attitude of the Church is the same as ever."

The relationship between the family and the state is marked by similar ambiguities. History is replete with examples of the state's attempt to bring the family and its practices under its control. Marxists, Bolsheviks, Fascists, moderates, and conservatives alike clamor for stricter state control over the family. Contrary to social theories, such as that expounded by the Swedish Nobel Prize recipient Alva Myrdahl, that the history of the twentieth century is the history of increased state control over the family, Mr. Mount finds that "the history of liberal regimes in the West since the mid-nineteenth century has been a story of gradual but accelerating relaxation of control"—a process that to his mind is all to the good of the family. But the belief that it is the state's business to control marriage and divorce dies hard. Witness demands, voiced recently with considerable persistence in Western societies, that it is the state's obligation to shore up a family "in crisis."

Only gradually is the family *qua* family beginning to impose its own terms, he argues, and is thus finally in a position to shed its subservient role. As the age of the "ordinary family" (a term Mr. Mount uses interchangeably with "working class") is about to dawn, as people begin to have confidence in their experience and take hold of their own lives, and not to be afraid of deducing moral values from their instincts and common sense, they can escape from the "underground rebellion" they have been forced into throughout history. At this point ordinary people will be able to oppose the immense networks of control erected around them, allegedly on their behalf.

How this dynamic process is to take effect and whether there is tangible evidence that such a process is at work, however, Mr. Mount fails to specify. In speaking of the "family's permanent revolution against the state and of the working-class family as the only true revolutionary class," he has no compunctions about stealing some of Marx's thunder for his own conservative vision. The

. . . the belief that it is the state's business to control marriage and divorce dies hard. Witness demands . . . to shore up a family "in crisis."

kind of fierce loyalty the ordinary man holds toward his family, his down-to-earth private attitudes, his way of deliberately and consciously choosing in order to protect and provide a better life for his family—these are supreme to the author. In a libertarian-conservative vein, he maintains that community spirit is a natural by-product of familial arrangements that "fit in with the wishes and serve the private ends of the individuals concerned." In a brilliant discourse against the manic preoccupation with new communal forms based on sentiments of fraternity (brotherhood, sisterhood, etc.) Mr. Mount presents a provocative and, to my knowledge, original argument. The elevation of fraternity over the family is nothing new: "Fraternity permeates both the Christian and the Marxist hope, lends warmth to liberalism and dogma to the anarchist." In reasoning that "brotherhood has been selected as the image of perfection not because it represents the family at its best but because it is the family at its least familial," he is able to penetrate to the core of the passionate antagonism that has characterized the most recent assault on the family. For what is at stake today is the weakening of the social bond, in Mr. Mount's own terms "the dilution of fraternity."

Watered Wine

If this image of fraternity becomes and remains a binding normative image, a new social paradigm will be enthroned, one in which innate tendencies toward impermanence, superficiality, indifference, and irresponsibility are contained *in nuce:* ". . . to promise more fraternity in general is to promise a weaker link between each particular pair of brothers. It is a promise to dilute the wine rather than turn the water into wine."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The author's assertion that the family has been and always will be central to individuals is one that contemporary researchers have come to accept, albeit with some reservations. It is therefore important to know what this paramount family looks like and what its distinctive features are. And here again, as Mr. Mount demonstrates, myths abound.

Through the eyes of scholars we have learned to perceive the nuclear family as a historical freak. Although the more extreme formulations of the historical theory of the family, most prominently exemplified by Friedrich Engels, are not shared by most scholars, the fusion of Engels's questionable anthropology with Marx's equally questionable economics has caught the fancy of many modern feminists along with that of more "progressive" social theorists. The nuclear family in this perspective is the product as well as the basis of the capitalist-bourgeois

[He] challenges other fashionable theories like maternal indifference and a distinctive feminine psychology that results from particular social forces.

order of social life, and their rise and fall inextricably intertwined. Family and system mirror each other implicitly as well as explicitly: Both are held to be fundamentally evil and destructive of individuals, cause as well as symptom of each other's failings. To transcend the one, the other must be transcended as well. Even many non-Marxist formulations widely hold the nuclear family to be the product of the political economy of the bourgeois-capitalist order. As the latter slips into chaos, the former will weaken and decay, or so the argument goes. Indeed, it is precisely assumptions along these lines that continue to inform contemporary policymakers in their efforts to supplement and provide alternatives to the nuclear family in crisis.

In *The Subversive Family* Ferdinand Mount manages to render a fatal blow to the central myth of the singularity of the nuclear family. He also casts doubt on some of the subsidiary myths surrounding it. The nuclear family, he says, is not a historical freak but the common practice (when permitted) and the norm in Western history from antiquity to the present. The extended family (several generations of various degrees of kin-relationship living under one roof) has never been a dominant pattern in the West. The author challenges other fashionable theories, like maternal indifference and a distinctive feminine psychology that results from particular social forces. Countering the fashionable ideas about divorce and its effects, he declares that the rising divorce rate serves to strengthen rather than weaken the institution of family.

Undoubtedly, the materials selected by Mr. Mount, the plausibility and the viability of his inferences, and above all, the new public vision of the normative role of the ordinary family will evoke a good deal of controversy. I, for one, certainly have a good number of problems with this admittedly fascinating treatise. My problems, in the main, relate not so much to his individual expositions—although some are rather selective and fragmentary indeed—as to the basic theoretical position underlying all of his arguments.

The Bourgeois Family

His basic position, that little has changed in the human condition, seriously underestimates the distinctiveness of our modern age. Not only does he underestimate the effect of the peculiar features of industrial technocracy, the role of the modern economy, the media, and the like, but his conception of the modern state and its immense powers is distinctly misleading. The relationship between the state and the family in contemporary society is by no means as simple as Mr. Mount makes it out to be. He ignores the impact of such diverse forces as the surge of new political pressure groups, the particularly novel role of the expansionary professional empires (legal, medical, therapeutic, educational), which along with other macrostructures impinge on the modern family and vie with the state—and through the state—for greater control over the family. It is misleading to argue that this is the age-old tug-of-war between state and family. Ignored, too, are powerful influences on the family flowing from the emergence of such peculiarly modern phenomena as the new individualism and the search for communal ties, to mention just two.

Above all, Mr. Mount fails to see the peculiar role of the bourgeois family, which is a distinctively modern expression of the nuclear family he rightly argues to have been common throughout Western history. In his impressive marshalling of diverse historical materials, very little is said about the nineteenth and twentieth centuries—precisely that period that witnessed the rise of the bourgeois family and the victory of its ideal. Yet the recent assault on the family has been precisely directed against this type of family. In failing to perceive the normative role of the nuclear family in its bourgeois form and the unique balancing act it performed between individual autonomy and community responsibility, and the peculiar role of religion and capitalism in all of this, Mr. Mount fails to perceive that ordinary families, the heroes of his treatise, are inspired today by fundamentally bourgeois sentiments, values, and hopes.

Perhaps the most serious shortcoming is the author's failure to explore the implications of his basic tenets for public policy. It would be good, indeed, to hear from the author himself. If the vision he formulates is taken seriously, and I hope it will be, it is likely to prompt much-needed dialogue on the family. Previous examinations of the family have yielded little insight, and the resulting dialogues have now grown so tiresome and stale. If Mr. Mount's book breathes new life into the subject of the family, it will benefit not only academics, politicians, and policymakers, but also the majority of ordinary people who desire to gain a hearing for their practices, their values, and their hopes.

Brigitte Berger

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Static Theory of Progress

Progress and Privilege: America in the Age of Environmentalism. *By William Tucker. (Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1982) $17.95.*

Building a Sustainable Society. *By Lester R. Brown. (W. W. Norton, 1981) $6.95.*

The Ultimate Resource. *By Julian L. Simon. (Princeton University Press, 1981) $14.50 hardcover, or $7.95 paperback.*

In the old days the environment (née nature) used to look after itself. Nature seemed sometimes to be a bountiful friend, at other times a malicious foe, but never a victim needing to be protected by man against man. Today, however, prophets warn us that nature is a dying invalid, sick with overcrowding, exhaustion of energy, overheating of its air, poisoning of its water, extinction of its species, and disturbance of its ecological systems. If this is true, we should be intensely concerned: Without an environment, man would be nowhere.

So rapid a reversal—for environmentalism is only twenty years old—is a cause for wonder. Why did many people suddenly begin to believe that the environment was ailing? What do they recommend as a cure? And how accurate is their diagnosis?

Leading episodes in the evolution of environmentalism are given brisk and thorough journalistic treatment by William Tucker. He shows, for instance, that the forecast of doom—that the world's population would before long overshoot the world's "carrying capacity," whereupon masses of people would die off—published in the Club of Rome's famous report, "The Limits of Growth" (1972), merely projected the pessimistic assumptions that Dennis Meadows and his colleagues had built into the model that guided their computer. He shows further that in a second report by the Club of Rome, published only four years later, a new team of computer experts rejected much of the first report and in fact came out for more rather than less economic growth. Elsewhere Mr. Tucker describes in detail how provincial politicians and "concerned" scientists almost stifled research in genetic engineering on the grounds that it *might* be dangerous (presumably unlike all other human activities). He recounts also the activities of the wilderness lobby, according to whom nature can remain natural only if human beings are kept away from it—as though man, alone among living things, were not part of nature.

Mr. Tucker's own attitude toward all of this is mixed. In environmentalism he detects two strands: preservationism, which he rejects, and conservationism, which he endorses. That is, he disapproves of the view that nature should be kept forever unsullied; he believes, on the contrary, that men should use nature, not exploiting it senselessly and wastefully, but using it in rational ways to serve man's ends. Recognizing rightly that environmentalists envision a great struggle between nature and man, he regularly comes down on the side of man—as when, for instance, he writes, "We should extend our moral concerns to plants, trees, and animals, *but not at the expense of human beings.*"

Far less satisfactory is Mr. Tucker's sociological interpretation of the environmentalist debate, which he characterizes as a struggle between privilege and progress. Always and everywhere, he believes, those people who are well off want things to be kept unchanged. This basic motive comes to be rationalized as the ethos of what Mr. Tucker calls "aristocratic conservatism": a preference for moral over material values and for gentleness over crass vitality. Accordingly, conservatives become conservationists. They deify nature as the embodiment of permanence and spiritual purity, and they condemn moneymakers, speculators, and businessmen, who, as they see it, are fighting an "unrelenting war on nature." Opposed to these privileged conservatives stand all those who, being relatively disadvantaged, want progress, by which the author means economic growth. In America today, according to Mr. Tucker, progress is supported by

If people understood clearly what would promote their private interests and always acted accordingly, the world would be simpler than it is . . .

blacks, labor union members, Neo-Populists, and rising businessmen; the supporters of privilege are the possessors of old wealth and the upper-middle class, consisting of professionals, salaried persons, and bureaucrats. The latter, according to Mr. Tucker, invented environmentalism, the current model of preservationist conservationism, the underlying spirit of which is illustrated in the comment made a hundred years ago by George Perkins Marsh: "wherever [man] plants his foot, the harmonies of nature are turned to discords."

Mr. Tucker's analysis of the sociology of environmentalism, not always easy to follow, is in my view far from persuasive. Plausible as it might seem that people who are well off would resist change (though it is not plausible that they would resist changes expected to fortify or improve their position), nevertheless the historical record shows that in fact many such people have been among the leaders and followers of revolution and reform. It may well be, as the author asserts, that the bulk of the American upper-middle class (assuming, for the sake of the argument, that such a thing really exists) supports environmentalism; yet it also supports any number of nonconservative causes, such as egalitarian redistribution, foreign aid, economic planning, and détente, as well as, I suppose, socialized medicine, disarmament, and feminism. In the same way, the disadvantaged, who by Tucker's reckoning ought rationally to support progress,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

As early as 1918 doomsayers foretold the imminent end of U.S. resources. Fortunately, Congress did not listen.

have regularly resisted it. Workers, not employers, invented sabotage of new machines, and unions are as likely as cartels to engage in restrictive practices. If people understood clearly what would promote their private interests and always acted accordingly, the world would be simpler than it is and different than Mr. Tucker thinks it is.

A fully developed and authoritative statement of the environmentalist position is put forward by Lester R. Brown, head of the Worldwatch Institute in Washington, D.C. His forecast is a comprehensive rehearsal of gloom. Population is booming. Cropland is diminishing, topsoil is thinning, and deserts are spreading. Food per capita is shrinking, fish are vanishing. Oil is depleting, firewood is scarce, coal pollutes, and nuclear power is being abandoned. All these predictions rest on statistical records and on the theoretical proposition that a finite world cannot accommodate "endless growth." In short, according to Mr. Brown, we are entering an "age of scarcity."

What can be done to avoid the impending disaster? First of all, says the author, we must replace the goal of "endless growth" by the goal of "sustainability"—a variation, better sounding at least, on the theme of "zero-growth." Then, as to the means to be adopted, Mr. Brown issues a great catalogue of prescriptions, many of them more ingenious than obviously practicable. The whole is illustrated by the steps he recommends for stabilizing population at the level of six billion. He proposes that government should provide birth-control services, legalize abortion, extend education, expand jobs for women, reduce long maternity leaves, raise the legal age of marriage, and abolish tax deductions for children. Noting that inflation, unemployment, and housing shortages tend to restrain the growth of population, he seems almost to say that governments should acquiesce in, if not actively sponsor, those braking forces. He especially commends the actions of the Chinese government, which officially delays marriage until the mid-20s, issues birth permits to couples according to how old they are and how many children they have, and encourages parents to have one child only, the latter by giving the parents higher wages, better pensions, ampler housing, and more food ("couples with one child will get adult grain rations for that child"), as well as by giving the only child "preferential consideration in both school admissions and job assignments."

Obviously, Mr. Brown's solution to a variety of environmental problems is a massive extension in the scope and intensity of government regulation. Though conceding that a free market worked well in times past, Mr. Brown holds that it cannot cope with present conditions

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of shrinking resources. Therefore the market must be steered, perhaps even replaced, by government. Yet governments often pursue wrong ends or use ineffective means, a fact that Mr. Brown concedes, as he must inasmuch as he is urging that many present policies of governments be reversed. Despite this, he entertains an astonishing faith that "most governmental intervention in the market is in the public interest." And equally astonishing, he seems at no point to wonder whether the corresponding decay of individual liberty would be a heavy cost to bear. This is not altogether surprising in someone who believes that we are engaged in a war for the survival of the human race or, even more serious, for the survival of the environment, and so a war in which as usual individuals suffer for the sake of a community. Deliberately or not, environmentalism assumes away the basic tenets of a free society.

Printed on the front cover of Lester Brown's book is this motto: "We have not inherited the earth from our fathers, we are borrowing it from our children." There is food for thought here, or, to change the metaphor, this is as stimulating as a sore throat. Our fathers could bequeath the earth to us because they owned it, but can our children lend it to us before they have acquired it? If you inherit a set of china, do you inherit with it a duty to pass it on unchipped, unworn, virginally intact? If you build a garden wall, have you borrowed it from your children? Granted that responsible parents recognize duties they owe to their children, have parents a duty to live poorly so that their children can live richly? Anyway, the earth is here, will quite possibly stay here a while, and can survive our neglect more successfully than our children could.

No Limits

The best compact answer to environmentalism that I have come across is provided by Julian L. Simon, an economist at the University of Illinois, in a book that is chatty in manner but brilliant in argument. His main conclusions are so bold and so contrary to common faith that they will provoke wide disbelief. Here are some samples. Natural resources are becoming more plentiful rather than less, and their supply is infinite rather than finite. The amount of land devoted to agriculture is increasing and could be increased further, though the best way in the long run to increase output is to raise the yield per acre. Production of food per capita has been growing and can reasonably be expected to grow further as population increases. Although pollution is unavoidable in some forms and degrees, "life-expectancy, which is the best over-all index of the pollution level, has improved markedly." Population may grow far less quickly than has been predicted: For instance, the United Nations, which in 1970 forecast that by the year 2000 the world would contain 7.5 billion people, in 1975 reduced the forecast to 5.6 billion, so acknowledging that their original estimate had overshot by as much as 25 percent. Moreover, population growth is not obviously undesirable. Each person added to the existing stock of people, while in some degree a burden on others, is also a boon to others, both as a producer and as an innovator. Whether the burden is regarded as more or less weighty than the boon depends on the observer's values. Mr. Simon himself regards increasing population as beneficial on the whole, especially in developed countries. Behind this appraisal lies the conviction expressed in his concluding sentence: "The ultimate resource is people—skilled, spirited and hopeful people who will exert their wills and imaginations for their own benefit, and so, inevitably, for the benefit of us all." The future he foresees is probably, albeit not certainly, rosy.

Julian Simon's manner of working is well illustrated in the way he goes about refuting the idea that raw materials are becoming scarcer. That idea, in its crude form, starts from the undoubted fact that the earth contains an absolutely limited amount of any given material (such as copper, for instance), draws the unquestionable inference that as we extract more copper from the earth less is left to be extracted in the future, and then jumps to the false conclusion that copper is becoming absolutely scarce. A more sophisticated version, mistakenly believed to rest on the law of diminishing returns, argues that at each successive moment copper must be extracted from a lode that is less rewarding than the last one to have been mined out, from which it follows that the cost of producing copper must constantly be rising.

Meanwhile, frequent visits to the dentist will do more than environmentalism can to safeguard the health of the human race.

The author's first response is to show that the price of copper, adjusted for changes in the value of money, has declined more or less steadily since 1800 and is now about one third of what it used to be. Similarly, the price of copper, as measured in relation to wages, is now less than one tenth of what it was in 1800, which means that one hour's work at today's average wage could provide the earner with more than ten times as much copper as two hundred years ago. This pattern, which applies more or less equally to iron, lead, aluminum, and other metals, does not sound much like scarcity, present or impending.

But of course environmentalists can lightly reply that the beneficent past is just about to end, and that things that have gone well will henceforth go wrong. In response, Mr. Simon produces figures about the earth's remaining stocks of metals. Such stocks can be measured by three standards: proven reserves, ultimate recoverable resources (defined as one-hundredth of 1 percent of material deposit in the outermost kilometer of the earth's crust), and total potential resources in the earth's crust. Consider copper, which is neither the most nor the least plentiful. In 1974, at the rate of consumption then current, proven reserves would have lasted for forty-five years, ultimate resources for 340 years, and potential resources for 242 million years. Lest anyone complain that forty-five years' worth of copper would not last out

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the lives of people now living, Mr. Simon demonstrates that proven reserves of various natural resources *increased* more or less rapidly between 1950 and 1970—in the intermediate case of copper, by 179 percent. And this was not a temporary bit of luck. Proven reserves are discovered because somebody has invested in exploration. As the demand for an extractive material rises, and as the cost of producing it falls because of technological advance, entrepreneurs are increasingly willing to invest in exploration. The result has been more or less consistent growth in identified reserves. Superficially it may seem paradoxical, but the truth is that the faster resources have been extracted, the greater has been the growth of proven reserves.

If, at this stage in the discussion, an environmentalist were to insist once again that since the earth is finite, it contains only a finite, exhaustible supply of resources, he might be invited not to worry about a state of exhaustion not due to arrive for thousands or millions of years. Meanwhile, frequent visits to the dentist will do more than environmentalism can to safeguard the health of the human race. Furthermore, the environmentalist might be informed that space travel makes possible and may soon make practical man's recourse to materials in other planets. But Mr. Simon takes a much bolder line, insisting that man's supply of natural resources is *infinite*. This conclusion, for which he produces various arguments, he justifies partly on the ground that energy—the master resource, with whose aid we can create all other resources—will remain in practically unlimited supply until the day, some millions or billions of years off, when our sun burns out—at which point, as the author robustly and rightly says, "there may well be other suns elsewhere."

. . . the best endowment we can leave to our children is not natural resources but the most artificial of resources, which is man-made capital.

In this way and in many others, Mr. Simon's book is an admirable antidote to environmentalism and can confidently be recommended for its preventive and curative properties alike. No house should be without it, nor the office of any journalist, academic, or legislator.

Almost everyone who disagrees with environmentalists feels obliged to disown any tendency toward complacency. If complacency means a habit of believing that all is well despite reasonable evidence to the contrary, it certainly should be avoided. But someone who declines to credit predictions of doom, predictions inadequately supported by evidence from experience or persuasive argument from theory, does not thereby exhibit complacency. It might be complacent never to carry an umbrella, but a person who carries an umbrella every day of the year is overdoing the effort to avoid complacency. Similarly, if we were to limit our consumption in order to guard our children against shortages that never materialized, we would, while avoiding complacency, have condemned ourselves and our children as well to needless deprivation. One sure road to poverty is to buy too much insurance.

From a purely material standpoint, the best endowment we can leave to our children is not natural resources but the most artificial of resources, which is man-made capital. Capital, especially in the form of education, is the best resource because it lasts a long time and is most adaptable to the unforeseeable contingencies of the future. Capital is formed by investment, which depends on saving, the extent of which is limited by the level of current production. Therefore, all else being equal, increasing current output is the easiest way to increase our stock of capital. From which it follows that were we, following the suggestion of environmentalism, to restrict economic growth, we would have diminished our potential for creating and handing on the best of all material gifts.

Then comes the question of to whom exactly we mean to leave our worldly goods. The answer, "to our children," is an emotional trap. Our duty to our own children is objectively plain and keenly felt by many parents—or almost all. But would it be right to deprive ourselves *and* our children now living for the sake of hypothetical descendants a century or two away? On a common moral theory—that our moral obligations are greatest to those with whom our lives are most closely intertwined and that such obligations recede with distance—far-off future generations have minimal claims to our moral attention. A driver who fixes his gaze on the far horizon is liable to knock down many pedestrians on the way. Exhortations urging people to endure avoidable hardships now "for the sake of future generations" are the stock in trade of dictators, fanatic visionaries, and revolutionaries, including peaceful revolutionaries like not a few environmentalists.

These issues and many others are ignored, glossed over, or obscured by environmentalists because of an intellectual disorder not previously diagnosed, which we might label "abstract displacement." Let us consider a simple case of the illness. Smith, an avid gardener, would like to stop Jones from walking across his lawn. Their neighbors sit in judgment. One says that Jones is invading property rights; another that Jones is threatening social peace; all agree that Jones is disturbing the environment. Smith answers that the environment, social peace, and property rights cannot feel pain, but that he, Smith, can and does. Smith says that he doesn't care whether the great abstractions are or aren't protected against Jones; it is he, Smith, who wants protection.

Following Smith's lead, the environmentalists would do well to stop worrying about the environment, for air, water, earth feel no pain, nor do resources. If instead they worried about the troubles experienced now by live human beings, and wondered whether there was any way that they could help relieve those, human life in the near future might conceivably improve a little bit.

William Letwin

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Short Shrift

Saudi Arabia in the 1980s: Foreign Policy, Security, and Oil. *By William B. Quandt. (Brookings Institution.)*

William Quandt, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, dealt with Middle East affairs as a member of the National Security Council under two administrations. His book is long on research, short on analysis, and bland in its recommendations. Logically constructed and well written, the book can be commended to anyone who seeks a better understanding of some of the problems—but by no means the major ones—facing the rulers of Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Quandt deals realistically with many challenges, external and internal, that might affect the stability of Saudi Arabia. But he does not discuss what is perhaps the central problem—namely a declining oil market and shrinking oil revenues. The Saudis have begun to dip into their financial reserves, reserves that are finite and will be used up in a few years unless the budget is cut drastically. But what to cut without getting into trouble? Foreign "aid" (to Iraq and the P.L.O.)? Military expenditures? Or social welfare services? And what should the United States do about a direct threat to the present Saudi regime? Does our national interest demand that we protect them, absent a direct Soviet takeover? Would not a successor government, even if unfriendly to the United States, continue to sell oil to the world market? And if oil supplies were interrupted, would this necessarily cause a calamity? In any case, do we have the capacity and the will to protect the Saudi monarchy—especially if it is faced with an internal insurrection?

These questions are not discussed or analyzed. But Mr. Quandt's book does give the impression that the members of the Al Saud family are quite skilled in looking out for their own survival and will somehow manage to weather many a crisis. But should they fail and be exiled, we need not be greatly concerned about them. With large investments abroad, Saudi princes can enrich life in many Western cities. And Sheik Yamani can always return to his alma mater and lecture at the Harvard Business School.

S. Fred Singer

Supply-Side Economics: A Critical Appraisal. *By Richard H. Fink. (University Publications of America.)*

Economic theory is probably in its greatest turmoil since the Keynesian revolution in the 1930s overturned the classical orthodoxy. This is evident in Richard H. Fink's book, which contains some two dozen essays by dominant figures in the supply-side school as well as some of its chief Keynesian, libertarian, monetarist, and even Marxist critics.

Most of the conflicts fleshed out in the essays emerge over whether a free market can better meet our needs and demands than a system of government intervention. Keynesian economists desire to stabilize the business cycle by manipulating aggregate demand through tax, spending, and monetary levers. Supply-siders aim for long-term economic growth by improving productivity and saving, and they claim that Keynesian countercyclical policy has not smoothed out the business cycle but in many cases has induced recessions and inflation.

Other points of conflict emerge: the ability of free markets to return the economy to full employment and to generate economic growth; the attractiveness of a gold standard versus a monetary rule or monetary discretion; whether supply creates demand (Say's law), or whether demand is the driving force behind supply; and whether a program of tax cuts and tight money is inherently contradictory.

There is, of course, no consensus on the proper prescription for stagflation. However, the book should lay to rest the contention that supply-side economics has come largely from the fertile imaginations of journalists and lacks strong support in the academic community. There is an impressive list of names defending various supply-side theories. And though the supply-siders have hardly vanquished their opponents, they have raised some damaging objections to opposing economic theories.

Thomas Humbert

Coughing in Ink: The Demise of Academic Ideals. *By Philip F. Lawler. (University Publications of America.)*

Once a quality training ground for the elite, whose responsibility was to preserve and to advance the best of their culture, the university embodied the finest in tradition, identified and embraced Judeo-Christian ideals, and maintained a reverence for and a commitment to an objective, absolute truth. In this profound and provocative book, Philip Lawler advances the thesis that the American university has separated itself from the ideals upon which it was founded and in so doing has lost its sense of integrity and mission. Egalitarianism

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

has replaced elitism; education for social mobility has replaced education for social service; the "multiuniversity" has replaced the focused curriculum; facts have replaced belief; agnosticism and socialism have replaced Judeo-Christian principles and democracy.

The inevitable products of this new university, Mr. Lawler laments, are college graduates with a basic distrust of and distaste for free enterprise, tradition, our cultural heritage, and God. Since graduates assume positions of leadership in society, their biases have infused and damaged society.

In partial remedy (one of several outlined in the book) Mr. Lawler advocates the separation of diverse educational philosophies into distinct institutions among which prospective students can choose. In this way focus of interest will be assured and a clear debate between opposing ideals possible.

Eileen M. Gardner

Deregulating Labor Regulations. *By Daniel C. Heldman, James Bennett, and Manuel Johnson. (Fisher Institute.)*

Why is it that those who specialize in the deregulation issue have avoided labor relations? After all, the product of labor is a commodity, and as such it is subject to the forces of competition. Thus the notion that wage rates need rectification by collective action is nonsense.

The authors do not deny that some objectives might be unachievable except through collective action. But the fact that problems of social cost require some independent authority to fix charges to attract adequate investment is irrelevant to attempts to redistribute income by fixing the price of labor through minimum wage laws, by indirectly restricting supply through hour rules, or other scarcity-contriving subterfuges.

Although the authors assert that "the unskilled worker bears the brunt of the regulation rather than reaping the benefit," they could have established more clearly the way interference in the pricing of services is poverty-creating. Free-market wage rates are determined by workers' perceived alternatives. They are set not through collective bargaining but through the process of firms' offering each worker enough wages to attract him from alternative value-producing activities. Because wage rates set by the market are consistent with full employment and maximum production, any mandatory negotiations intended to "improve" that situation must be impoverishing. A worker's alternatives protect him from exploitation and ensure a just price for his services. But because of the principle of exclusivity, the worker who creates more or superior products is often unable to reap the rewards. The value of his labor is distributed to his colleagues.

The authors are inevitably brought to the dilemma that confronts all critics of organized labor. They recognize that labor unions act antisocially, yet they seem to consider the union movement sacred. They go out of their way to assure union hierarchies that their jobs will be secure even if the Wagner Act, the Davis-Bacon Act, the Clayton Act, and the other laws created by political pressure to contrive labor scarcities were repealed. They say deregulation "would greatly broaden the scope of labor unions in representing employees if unions could adapt to the changed circumstances of a deregulated environment." But the whole purpose of unions is to fix a higher price for labor services than that the free market would determine. And the means is the strike, the threat of a strike, or some other form of violence. In any free society, all private coercion, whether peaceful or not, needs to be eradicated.

William H. Hutt

Consequences of Party Reform. *By Nelson W. Polsby. (Oxford University Press.)*

After the Democratic Party's debacle of 1968, sweeping party reforms were implemented with the intention of broadening participation in the political process, particularly in the nomination of presidential candidates. These changes, especially in the areas of campaign finance and delegate selection, have had a number of unintended and unwelcome consequences, argues Nelson Polsby in his latest book. The reforms have had dire consequences for the Democratic Party, the nature of party competition, and the presidency itself.

Federal subsidies to presidential candidates, restrictions on other sources of campaign money, and the parties' loss of control over delegate selection—these three changes have resulted in a vastly different nomination process and a different type of presidential candidate. Professor Polsby states that primaries now dominate the nominating process, forcing candidates to mobilize factions in each state rather than concentrating on building a broadbased coalition. This, he argues, naturally forces candidates to build their own personal organizations in each state, weakening the national parties' influence over the political process.

Instead, outside groups and the media are allowed to play a much larger role in the process than previously. Professor Polsby believes that this has made elections chancier, more unpredictable, more susceptible to outside influence, and less equitable. The final result is a candidate who has the ability to appeal to and mobilize an electoral faction, but not one who is necessarily able to govern. An obvious example is Jimmy Carter.

Finally, Professor Polsby makes a number of suggestions to reform the reforms. He advocates a "mixed" nomination system, where state situations would dictate whether state conventions, primary elections, or interest groups were allowed to dominate the process in each state. The result, he argues, would be a president with a more complete and enlightened understanding of what is necessary to govern successfully. *Consequences of Party Reform* is vital reading for anyone concerned with how we choose our leaders.

Robert Valero

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE FUTURE OF NATO

NATO TODAY:
Curing Self-Inflicted Wounds
In this trenchantly argued paper Dr. Codevilla suggests that NATO strategy is based on a series of illusions. The foremost of these, he says, are a naive and false assessment of Soviet strength and strategy and a wholly erroneous belief in America's willingness "to unleash Armageddon in case of an attack on Europe." But the Atlantic Alliance can be saved if Europe is prepared to shed its illusions and make the economic sacrifice necessary to render NATO strategically viable, he says. In the absence of such steps, the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Europe will be almost inevitable.

GREAT BRITAIN AND NATO:
A Parting of the Ways?
Following the Labour Party's adoption of a policy of unilateral disarmament, Dr. Carlton describes the likely implications of Labour's defence and foreign policy for the future of NATO.

Available from:

Institute for European Defence & Strategic Studies
Fourth Floor, 12a Golden Square, London W1R 3AF

Each price £1.75 (incl. 25p p&p).
Overseas orders £2 (incl. p&p).

Discrimination, Affirmative Action, and Equal Opportunity:
An Economic and Social Perspective

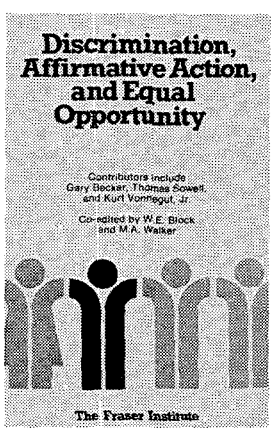
This book discusses the economics of racial discrimination, prejudice, minority income differentials, and the landmark reverse discrimination decisions in the Weber and Bakke cases. Economists Gary Becker, Thomas Sowell, Walter Williams, Michael Walker, Walter Block; sociologists Lance Roberts, Carl Hoffman, and John S. Reed; and novelist Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. show that:

- racial discrimination cannot explain black-white earnings differentials.
- affirmative action programs have been a disaster.
- government programs have been more of a hindrance than a help to the well-being of minority group members.

This is a propitious and important book which serves to remind the reader that the change in the meaning of affirmative action . . . is fundamentally a change for the worse.

Canadian Public Policy

- **271 pages**
- **16 tables**
- **2 figures**
- **index**
- **ISBN 0-88975-039-4**
  Price: $9.95 paperback
  $1.50 postage and handling


Discrimination, Affirmative Action, and Equal Opportunity
Contributors include Gary Becker, Thomas Sowell and Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.
Co-edited by W.E. Block and M.A. Walker
The Fraser Institute

For copies of this book and/or a complete listing of Institute titles, please write:
The Publications Department, The Fraser Institute, 626 Bute Street, Vancouver, Canada V6E 3M1

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bust to Boom

David Ranson

As this is written, at the beginning of April, it appears irrefutable that the economy has turned the corner. A boom has begun. It was a sharp corner indeed, and it occurred almost precisely at the turn of the year. I don't believe this timing was an accident; there are good reasons to have anticipated that the economy would continue to falter all the way through 1982 and that the turning point would come at year-end.[1] To explain why and to draw implications for the economic outlook today, I need to sketch an "incentivist" theory of turning points. This requires a brief detour.

. . . the two-year boom now under way could be the most vigorous in several decades—just as 1982's recession was the deepest . . .

Shortly after Margaret Thatcher became prime minister of Great Britain in 1979, she decided to raise the value-added tax (VAT) sharply to pay for her across-the-board income tax cut. (The VAT is a tax paid on most retail transactions.) In early June, the government announced a hike in the VAT rate from 8 to 15 percent. The date of effect, call it T-day, was three weeks from the date of the announcement. Now, you don't need to be an "incentivist" to be an alert consumer, and the evidence suggests that British consumers were very alert indeed. For a country whose population is sometimes said to be deadened to taxation, the response was remarkable. In the month of June a volume of retail sales was recorded the like of which has rarely if ever been seen before or since. Then, on T-day, the boom ceased abruptly. Retail trade fell and remained at a subdued level for a long time thereafter. Registrations of new cars, for example, which had risen in June to above 200 percent of 1976 levels, fell in July to below 1976 levels. To use an idiom that I have found no technical terms to improve upon, there was a three-week "flip" in economic activity followed by an extended "flop." And the turning point from flip to flop can be pinpointed to the day. This flip-flop phenomenon is reminiscent of the economic discontinuities that we often see at the border between two tax jurisdictions. When the D.C. government imposed a surtax on gasoline sales a few years ago, it merely drove people to buy their gas a few miles away in Maryland or Virginia. (The surtax had to be rescinded.) We observe high-tax Massachusetts losing liquor sales, business investment, housing construction, and ultimately population to low-tax New Hampshire just over the state line. Canadians these days are showing up in droves at the nearest airport on the U.S. side of the border to escape the still-regulated fare structure of the Canadian airlines. Although no explicit tax is involved here, the principle is the same. In all cases, the line at which the discontinuity in economic activity occurs can be identified—in effect, predicted—precisely.

I believe that many ups and downs in the U.S. economy can be traced to the same mechanism that operates in these illustrations.[2] And they are as predictable as in the Thatcher case, although the circumstances and timing are quite different. Incentives arising from tax rate differences can and do alter the behavior of Americans in various ways. However, the complexity of our tax structure, and the frequency with which it changes, makes it far more difficult to see what is going on than in the isolated example of a VAT tax hike. In that example, even the government fully understood what happened. But in our usual environment, few even try to understand why turns occur when they do; most of us are too busy trying to recognize a turn once it has already happened.

U.S. tax rates change from year to year in a fashion that is not always easy to predict. Tax decisions by Congress are very difficult to anticipate, and some of them, cliff-hangers till the last moment, are made retroactive. Tax rate changes also emanate from bracket creep, to an extent depending on an inflation rate that is often volatile. Nevertheless, we do have expectations about what will happen to tax rates from one year to the next, and the people who fill out our tax forms consider these expectations important. Furthermore, our T-day is easy to identify: It practically always falls on January 1.[3]

As in the VAT example, a change in tax rate expectations will set off a flip-flop in the economy as producers and spenders try to preempt the expected change. In effect, we get one year's warning of these turns in the economy—if we know how to read the relevant signals.

The job of monitoring expected tax changes, and using them to predict turning points in the economy, seems formidable. Luckily, the financial markets do a lot of the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

work for us. Short-term interest rates reflect, among other things, expectations about two factors that borrowers will readily concede lenders ought to be compensated for: inflation and taxation. Increase the expected rate of inflation, and interest rates will rise. Keep expected inflation the same while raising next year's tax bite, and interest rates will rise, too. Thus, by monitoring short-term interest rates, we can keep track of two of the chief sources of bad news about next year's taxation: bracket creep and legislative changes.

Our work at Wainwright confirms that interest rate movements do signal year-to-year flip-flops in the economy. Indeed, we were aware of overwhelming evidence that this mechanism was operating before we had an adequate explanation for it. It is possible to anticipate turning points a year or longer in advance, and we publish such forecasts routinely. Despite the large number of extraneous factors striking the economy at all times, this approach has accurately called the direction, timing, and magnitude of recent turns. Unlike conventional forecasters, we predicted in mid-1981 that real GNP would be off 2 percent in 1982.

Sputtering or Steaming?

At present this market forecast, as we call it, calls for growth of 5 to 6 percent in 1983 relative to 1982's depressed level. This forecast is higher than most (if not all), although there is some movement on the part of others in this direction. *Blue Chip*'s consensus has moved up from 2.5 percent to a reported 2.9 percent in the last couple of months,[4] and the administration will raise its estimate from 1.4 to 2.9 percent, according to official or unofficial newspaper leaks. Many such forecasts, though, appear to be shifting more in response to the economy than in anticipation of it. The shift in opinion resulting from the turn is slightly more dramatic when the inertia of the reporting is taken into account. Not all forecasters revise their estimates every month. Of forty-five forecasters represented in the *Blue Chip* list, thirty changed their estimate between early February and March. Of these, only one estimate was lowered, and seven were increased by half a point or more.

Economists are now debating whether the recovery that showed up so strongly in January will be sustained or will sputter out. The weakness of retail sales in February and March caused some to cool their jets. But the market-oriented method I describe is firm on this point: Barring much larger shifts in interest rates than are yet foreseen by the futures markets, recovery should proceed rapidly all year. Indeed, 1984 is expected to be another year of rapid growth. Taken together, the two-year boom now under way could be the most vigorous in several decades—just as 1982's recession was the deepest calendar-year downturn.

The next plausible time for a turn back into recession, as the financial markets see it now, would be around the end of 1984—just after the election.

There are a surprising number of lessons to be drawn from the Thatcher VAT illustration. First, not all of the movements that an economy makes can be characterized as the gradual progression of a trend-cycle identified through a haze of "white noise," as the textbooks would have it. Sharp reversals can be recognized and even predicted. In effect, the economy can bounce. For example, a sharp rise in interest rates followed by a sharp decline a year or so later (as occurred between 1980 and 1982) is a devastating sequence. Viewed from this perspective, the projected boom of 1983–84 is not an isolated event but the other side of the 1982 coin.

Powerful Incentives

Second, not all economic movements can be attributed to a disequilibrium between demand and supply. The British flip-flop showed up at all levels of the economy, including domestic product and industrial production. Incentives imposed on consumers were transmitted within a matter of days to alter the behavior of producers. Contrary to the strategy behind Thatcher's tax changes,[5] the supply side of the economy moved in concert with the demand side. A similar sort of disequilibrium thinking leads many today to mistake the current behavior of the economy for an inventory phenomenon.

Third, the power of incentives to influence output and spending varies with the durability of the taxed item. A consumer will take advantage of this temporary tax haven in the case of purchases he can readily bring forward or postpone—appliances and other durables, for example. But his hands are tied when it comes to perishables. June 1979 saw a modest boom in clothing and footwear but a big burst of automobile registrations. That is why it should be no surprise today to see consumer durable goods industries like housing at the vanguard of the boom.

References

1. "1983: Depression or Recovery," *Political Update*, H. C. Wainwright Economics, April 20, 1982, p. 2.
2. From *The Conditional Forecaster: Harnessing the Power of Market Prices to Anticipate the Economy*, 1983.
3. It is at the start of the calendar year that nearly all changes in income, corporate or Social Security tax rates take place. The fiction that the Reagan-Kemp-Roth tax cuts take effect on July 1 forgets that, come April 15, income earned during each year's first half will be taxed exactly like income earned in the second half.
4. *Blue Chip Economic Indicators*, published by Eggert Economic Enterprises, Sedona, Arizona.
5. Thatcher had intended to curb inflation through the VAT hike on demand, while she stimulated supply through her cuts in the income tax. The impossibility of having it both ways still escapes policymakers on both sides of the Atlantic.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Selected Heritage Foundation Policy Studies

Agenda '83: A Mandate for Leadership Report, *edited by Richard N. Holwill (1983; $12.95 hardcover, $6.95 paperback).*

The Annual Guide to Public Policy Experts 1983, *edited by Robert Huberty and Catherine Ludwig (1983; $4.00).*

Understanding Reaganomics, *by Peter Germanis, Thomas Humbert, and David Raboy (1982; $4.00).*

The First Year: A Mandate for Leadership Report, *edited by Richard N. Holwill (1982; $10.95 hardcover, $6.95 paperback).*

Constraining Inflationary Government, *by Antonio Martino (1982; $4.00).*

Essays in Supply Side Economics, *edited by David G. Raboy (1982; $10.95 hardcover, $5.95 paperback).*

Back to Basics, *by Burton Yale Pines (1982; $13.50 hardcover).*

The Annual Insider Index to Public Policy Studies 1982, *edited by Mary Sutphin (1983; $4.00).*

The Inter-American Foundation, *by Cleto DiGiovanni, Jr. (1981; $4.00).*

U.S.—Japan Mutual Security: The Next 20 Years, *edited by Edwin J. Feulner, Jr., and Hideaki Kase (1981; $5.00).*

Mandate for Leadership, *edited by Charles L. Heatherly (1981; $21.95 hardcover, $12.95 paperback).*

Agenda for Progress: Examining Federal Spending, *edited by Eugene J. McAllister (1981; $11.95 hardcover, $6.95 paperback).*

FISCAL ISSUES

Towards a Stable Monetary Policy: Monetarism vs. The Gold Standard *(1982; $2.00).*

Philanthropy in America, *by Stuart M. Butler (1980; $2.00).*

The Value Added Tax: Facts and Fancies, *by Norman B. Ture (1979; $2.00).*

CRITICAL ISSUES

Screening Federal Employees: A Neglected Security Priority, *by David Martin (1983; $3.00).*

Social Security Reform: The Family Plan, *by Peter J. Ferrara (1982; $3.00).*

Safety Nets and the Truly Needy: Rethinking the Social Welfare System, *by Charles A. Murray (1982; $3.00).*

Strategic Minerals: The Economic Impact of Supply Disruptions, *by James T. Bennett and Walter E. Williams (1981; $3.00).*

Corrigible Capitalism, Incorrigible Socialism, *by Arthur Seldon (1981; $3.00).*

East Germany: Marxist Mission in Africa, *by John M. Starrels (1981; $3.00).*

Reforming the Military, *edited by Jeffrey G. Barlow (1981; $3.00).*

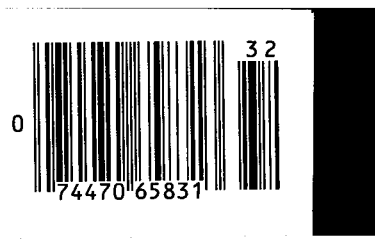
The Economics of Education Tax Credits, *by E. G. West (1981; $3.00).*

The Soviet Strategy of Terror, *by Samuel T. Francis (1981; $2.00).*

Domestic Oil: The Hidden Solution, *by Milton R. Copulos (1980; $2.00).*

For a complete list of publications—or to order any of the above—write to:
Dept. G, The Heritage Foundation, 214 Massachusetts Avenue, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED